SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

Myth, Conflict, and Faith

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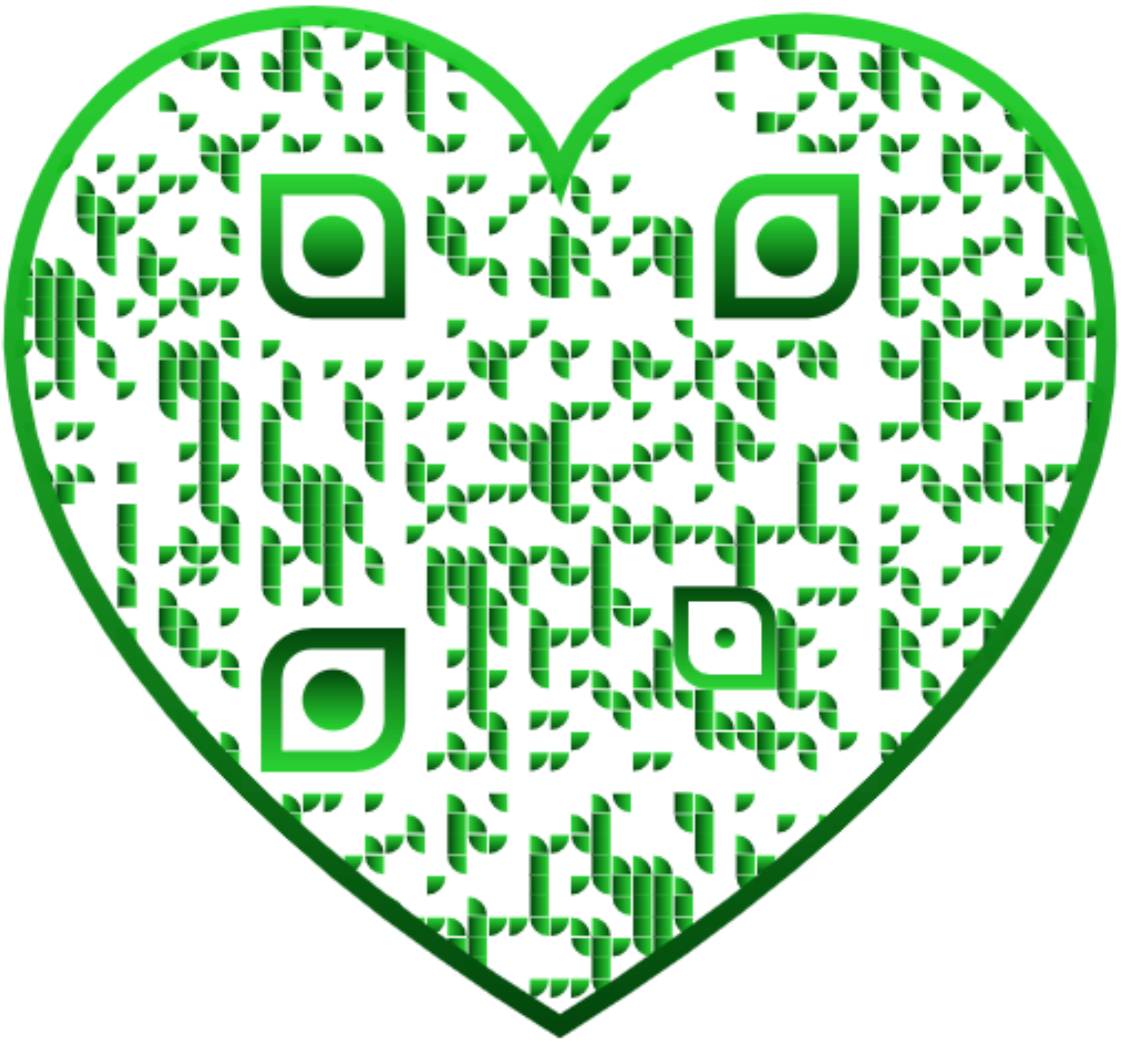

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Prologue

This is a history of Solomon's Temple and the place where it once stood. In the present it has several names: in its most ancient form it was Mount Moriah — tradition holds that it was here on this hill that Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac; in Hebrew it is *Har haBayit* — Temple Mount; in Arabic it is *al-Haram al-Sharif* — the Noble Sanctuary. For much of this history it will be called Temple Mount.

The book is written to bring life to past realities. It assembles the surviving texts and images that have sustained the idea of this place over time. These are by necessity subjective impressions, but the place itself is defined by just two structures in its more than 4000-year history—the Jewish Temple of Solomon, long since destroyed, and Islam's Dome of the Rock. These are finite objects through which the imagination can reenter its past.

It is a troubled place, existing in such a confused web of fact and fiction that only by probing deeply into the multiple layers of acts and desires that have played out on its surface can the intersections between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam be appreciated.

Solomon built his temple in Jerusalem 3000 years ago to house the Ark of the Covenant and be the only place of sacrifice for the Jewish people. A poem in the *Midrash Tanhuma*[1] offers a graphic sense of the significance of *Har haBayit* to Judaism:

> As the navel is set in the center of the human body,
>
> so is the land of Israel the navel of the world…
>
> and Jerusalem is the center of the land of Israel,
>
> and the sanctuary in the center of Jerusalem,
>
> and the holy place in the center of the sanctuary,
>
> and the Ark in the center of the holy place,
>
> and the Foundation Stone before the holy place,

because from it the world was founded.

For some, *Even haShetiya*, the Foundation Stone that held the Ark of the Covenant, is still present in Temple Mount.

It is on Temple Mount that Christ's actions that eventually lead to his crucifixion come to the attention of the priests. Matthew writes:

> And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple: and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children that were crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were moved with indignation.[2]

In the Qur'an (*al-Israel*, Sura 17: 1) Muhammad wrote of his miraculous flight from Mecca to Jerusalem:

> Glory be to Him Who made His servant to go on a night from the Sacred Mosque to the remote mosque of which We have blessed the precincts, so that We may show to him some of Our signs; surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing.[3]

The “Sacred Mosque” was in Mecca, the “Remote Mosque,” [usually rendered as “The Furthest Mosque”] in Arabic *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*, was on the Noble Sanctuary, al-Haram al-Sharif.

At present, three distinct populations live in the old city of Jerusalem—Arab, Jew, and Armenian Christian—and though they all walk the same streets and breathe the same air, they exist in quite separate worlds. The Muslim Arabs are the poorest and the most ancient presence. Many are dressed in the loose tunics and turbans that have remained unchanged for centuries. They are at home in the dense network of streets that attach to the west wall of al-Haram al-Sharif, literally the “Sacred and Noble.” Al-Haram still contains the “Furthest Mosque” but is dominated by the golden Dome of the Rock, completed in the year 69 of the *Hijra*, *Anno Hegirae*, or 691 in the Common Era. This, Islam's third-holiest place, after Mecca and Medina, is not a mosque but the first Muslim shrine, formed to symbolize the strength of the one God. It lies above a rock cave whose origins are profoundly mysterious.

Here the faithful remember the *Isra*, Muhammad's miraculous flight from Mecca to this very place on the back of his white steed *al-Buraq*—“Lightning.” They can touch the post where it was tethered; they look to

the Dome and feel the presence of Muhammad as he was met by Jesus and Abraham. They have seen the Prophet's footprints in the rock beneath the Dome as he prepared to climb the golden ladder to heaven into the presence of God. During Ramadan, Muslims from across the world fill the great platform in front of al-Aqsa Mosque in prayer. As they pray they are reminded that it is written of this place that when the world comes to an end, the dead will return and judgment be pronounced on every person in accordance with his deeds.[4]

Christians arrive in the city to be close to Christ's Passion and to walk in his footsteps along the Via Dolorosa. Some gather on the terraces below the Mount of Olives, overlooking the vast platform dominated by the Dome, and their preachers compel imaginations into reliving the fateful day when Christ descended into the city. “Here,” they point “is where the path led across the Kidron Valley, here the gate where Christ entered the city.” If the Temple is mentioned at all, it is to imagine Christ driving out the moneychangers from somewhere at the west end of the platform, and to be reminded that he foretold the destruction of the Temple, saying to his disciples that “not one stone upon another,” would be left standing. As they look down across the monument of Islam some Christians see in the distant future a new temple and are comforted because it will mean their world has reached the “end of time.” This will be the prelude to the “second coming” of Christ. He will materialize in a flash of brilliant light just outside a gate, a gate they can see now blocked up near the center of the wall facing them.

For the Jews there are two Jerusalems: the secular city, and the orthodox city. Religion dominates life in the orthodox city. The residents live in enclaves and strictly observe *Halakha*, the laws of the faith. Every morning, men can be seen striding with great deliberation from their apartment buildings into the lanes of the old city to *Kothel Hama'arabit*, the Western Wall; sweeping all aside, self consumed and anxious beneath wide brimmed hats and black coats; their prayer shawls in plastic packets under their arms. All Jews are compelled to pray against the Western Wall and as they pray they are closest to God, for in the Midrash it is written that “the Divine Presence (*Shechina*) never departs from the Western Wall.”[5] This is the most sanctified place in Judaism. Temple Mount is the only place where God dwelt on earth and for some the only place from which he will deliver the Messiah.

The Western Wall is a remnant of the Temple complex restored by Herod in 19 BCE. In 70 CE the Romans demolished the Temple as they regained control of Judea and drove the Jews out. A desire to rebuild the Temple has lingered in imaginations ever since. Another figure compels the mind of some who are praying at the Wall. Sifting through the traces of ancient structures they strain to envisage a chamber in which the Ark of the Covenant has rested.

Looking down on Temple Mount from the hill to the east, it is still possible to remove the massive structure and visualize a small hill rising steeply out of the Kidron Valley. Add to this the groves of olives on the slopes, some simple lean-to farm buildings, and, near the top, a threshing field and a donkey endlessly circling, and see the approach of King David with his retinue: he would buy the land, all according to the Old Testament book of Samuel.

This formative act is shared equally in the books of the Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Travel back a further thousand years; it is the same hill rising above the trees in the valley, covered in thickets of dense brush; thorny and dry. Those for whom the Bible is literal truth can visualize the scene: they are watching from a distance an extremely old man slowly and carefully forming an altar from loose stones and on it setting out the makings of a fire from twigs and branches. Inexplicably, his young companion, his son, agrees to be tied hand and foot and voluntarily lies down on the pyre. It is written in Genesis that this is the place where God tested Abraham's faith by demanding as proof the sacrifice of a son. The imagination sees that moment when God thanked Abraham for his obedience and confirmed that he would be the father of nations, and Isaac and Jacob and all who descended from them would be his chosen people. It was the birth of a new religion.

Notes

[1] The Midrash on the Torah are careful studies and interpretations of the books of the Old Testament. The Tanhuma, named after a fourth-century scholar, are commentaries on the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Jewish and Christian Bibles). This much used quote is from the Midrash attributed to Rabbi Tanchuma bar Abba (c. 370 CE), and this, the most

widely used English translation, is by Rabbi Avrohom Davis.

[2] Matthew 21: 14–15. All quotations from the Old and New Testaments are from the Authorized (King James) Bible (AV).

[3] All quotations from the Qur'an are from the University of Michigan Library On Line eBook Initiative *The Koran*, translated by M. H. Shakir and published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1983 http://quod.lib.umich.edu/k/koran/(accessed March 4, 2012).

[4] See Epilogue to this volume, especially notes 1 and 2.

[5] Interpretation from Rabbi Eliezer: The Divine Presence never departed from the Temple, as it is written, “For now I have chosen and sanctified this house so that My name shall be there forever and My eyes and My heart will be there all the days” (II Chronicles 7: 16)… Even when [the Temple] is destroyed, it remains in its sanctity. … Even when it is destroyed, God does not leave it. And Rebbe Acha said: The Shechina (Divine Presence) will never depart from the Western Wall, as it is written, “Behold—He stands behind our wall” (Song of Songs 2: 9). Midrash Rabba, Lamentations 1: 31.

Chapter 1

Solomon's Temple

Told and retold myriad times, the poetic blend of faint truths and splendid myths that shape the creation of a people and a religion have, over time, acquired a greater reality in the imagination than they could ever have sustained in fact. What follows, without question, are the major elements of these tales out of which the Temple of Solomon was formed.

Before there was Jerusalem, before there was Judea, Mount Moriah, Temple Mount, was known to God. In the book of Genesis,[1] God ordered the first Hebrew patriarch Abraham to “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation…” His father's house was in the city of Ur[2] in Mesopotamia, a wealthy and civilized city well over a thousand years old when Abraham was summoned.[3] After years of wandering and suffering, Abraham arrived in Canaan, the land chosen by God, and was told “Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for unto thee will I give it. And Abram[4] moved his tent, and came and dwelt by the terebinths of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the LORD:”[5] Hebron is a name and town that has survived into the present.[6]

Twenty-five years after arriving in Hebron, Abraham produced a son, Isaac; Abraham was 100 years old. Genesis records God's dreadful instruction to an aged father, “Take now…thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac,[7] and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”[8]

As he prepared the sacrifice, the son called out “My father…Behold, the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” And Abraham replied, “God will see for himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” The lamb was Isaac. Then “Abraham built the altar…and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.” The son

offered no resistance. “And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham…Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.” Only then did this demanding God provide a beast for sacrifice: “And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.”[9]

Abraham's reward for such obedience was to become the father of a people. “I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven” said God “and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”[10]

The book of Genesis was set down almost three millennia ago, formed in a time when there was no singular idea of God, yet here in these events is the emergence of one Supreme Being.[11] The image of a father being forced to prove his faith by killing his son reveals the character of this singular God. Nothing could be more graphic in demonstrating the burden of this faith. And Mount Moriah, still in the midst of Jerusalem, would forever hold the memory of this presence closely watching Abraham and the prone figure of Isaac, bound upon a funeral pyre.

In *Antiquities of the Jews*, a work completed toward the end of the first century of the Common Era, Jewish-Roman historian Josephus Flavius (henceforth referred to as Josephus) retells in his own words much of the content of the books of the Old Testament. It occasionally offers surprising contrast to scripture. Josephus explains God's actions: “It was not out of a desire of human blood…nor was he willing that [Isaac] should be taken from…his father,” it was instead, to test Abraham's mind: would he be obedient to such a command? All was now resolved, God “was satisfied…he was delighted in having bestowed such blessings upon him; and his son should live to a very great age; and bequeath a large principality to his children, who should be good and legitimate.”[12] Josephus (37–100 CE)was a rabbi and a general. He lived through the most catastrophic event in Jewish-Roman history and managed to play on both sides of the conflict, which

makes his major written works *The Antiquities of the Jews* and *The Wars of the Jews* highly valuable commentary on all the events that follow.

The Ark of the Covenant

Modern scholarship dates the Hebrew persecution and flight from Egypt to around 3300 years ago, during the rule of Pharaoh Ramses II from 1304 to 1237 BCE.

The origin of the word "Hebrew" is not known with certainty. One theory is that it was derived from the word *eber*, or *ever*, a Hebrew word meaning the "other side," a reference perhaps to a people who were not Egyptian. Another theory is that it was the name given to the semi-nomadic *Habiru*, recorded in the hieroglyphs of Ramses II.[13] From the way these are placed in the inscriptions, the designation *Habiru* is not thought to have had any ethnic or racial connotation, but rather describes a class of people providing casual labor where needed.[14] Exodus, the second book of the Old Testament, clearly states that this was the role of the children of Israel, "the Egyptians…made their lives bitter with hard service, in mortar and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, all their service, wherein they made them serve with rigour."[15]

The Egyptian economy was driven and shaped by the task of constructing monuments to ease the passage of the Pharaoh into the afterlife. It consumed vast numbers of conscripted laborers. Ramses II built cities and shrines, and expanded the temples and tombs of his predecessors along the Nile: on structures old and new, many still standing, he would cover the walls with texts that endlessly praised his victories and his divine nature.[16] Texts can still be read recording that the cities of *Pi Ramesse* and *Pi thom* were built for Ramses II by the *Hibaru*. This is repeated in Exodus, "And they built for Pharaoh store cities, *Pithom* and *Raamses*."[17] Whether the *Habiru* were a mongrel group of migrant workers from across the lands controlled by Egypt or a unified tribal group, their lives and their labor would have been in the service of this prodigious builder: their persecution would have been the abuse of that labor.[18] That labor would also establish in their collective memory both the effective power of great building and the means for

achieving it (Figure 1.1). It is within the intimate family of this god-king that the character of Moses was formed. The tale of the abandoned child being found in the bulrushes by a daughter of the Pharaoh Seti I has been so sweetened in the popular imagination that the significance of Moses' relation to the court of the Pharaoh has been diminished. Consider that the same Moses, guiding prophet and teacher, who led the Hebrew people out of the slavery of Egypt, grew up as a privileged ward of the royal court. It was Moses who, in his twenties, attacked and murdered a court official for killing a Hebrew laborer, and then fled into the desert. It was Moses who, time and again, confronted Ramses II with the demand that he, and the people with whom he had kinship, be allowed to leave Egypt. It was to Moses that the true God of the Hebrew, *Yahweh*, was revealed. Yahweh in translation suggests "He Who Brings Into Existence Whatever Exists"[19] and it was Yahweh who had commanded him to lead this people out of Egypt. And after arguments, threats, and signs of divine intervention Ramses II finally allowed Moses to leave and lead the great Exodus (Figure 1.2). Though the Exodus exists more as myth than fact, it is within the narrative that the ritual performance is defined that will be enshrined in the Temple.

Figure 1.1 Karnack, the Hall of Columns, a temple complex greatly expanded by Ramses II. Francis Firth, 1856.

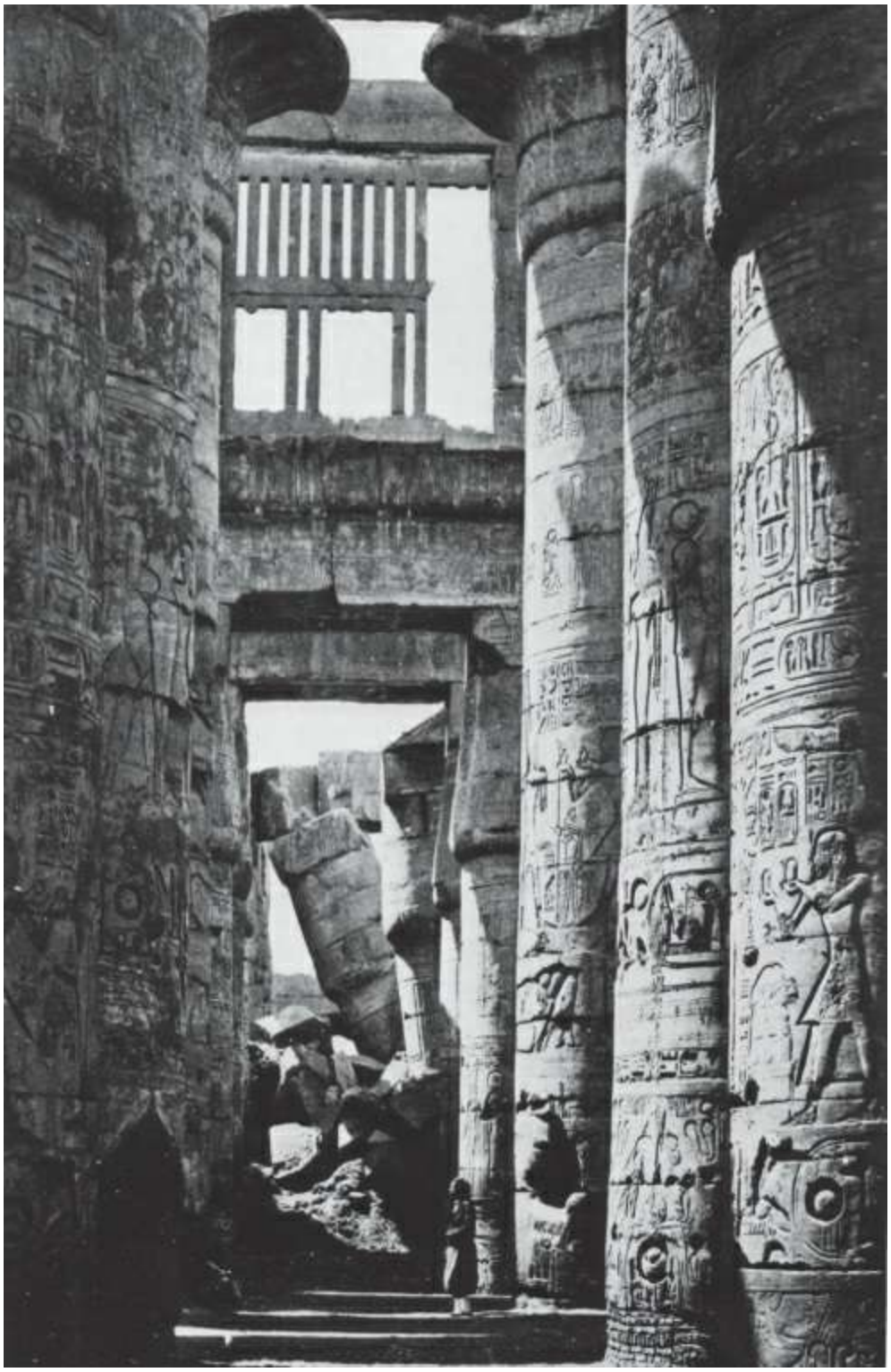
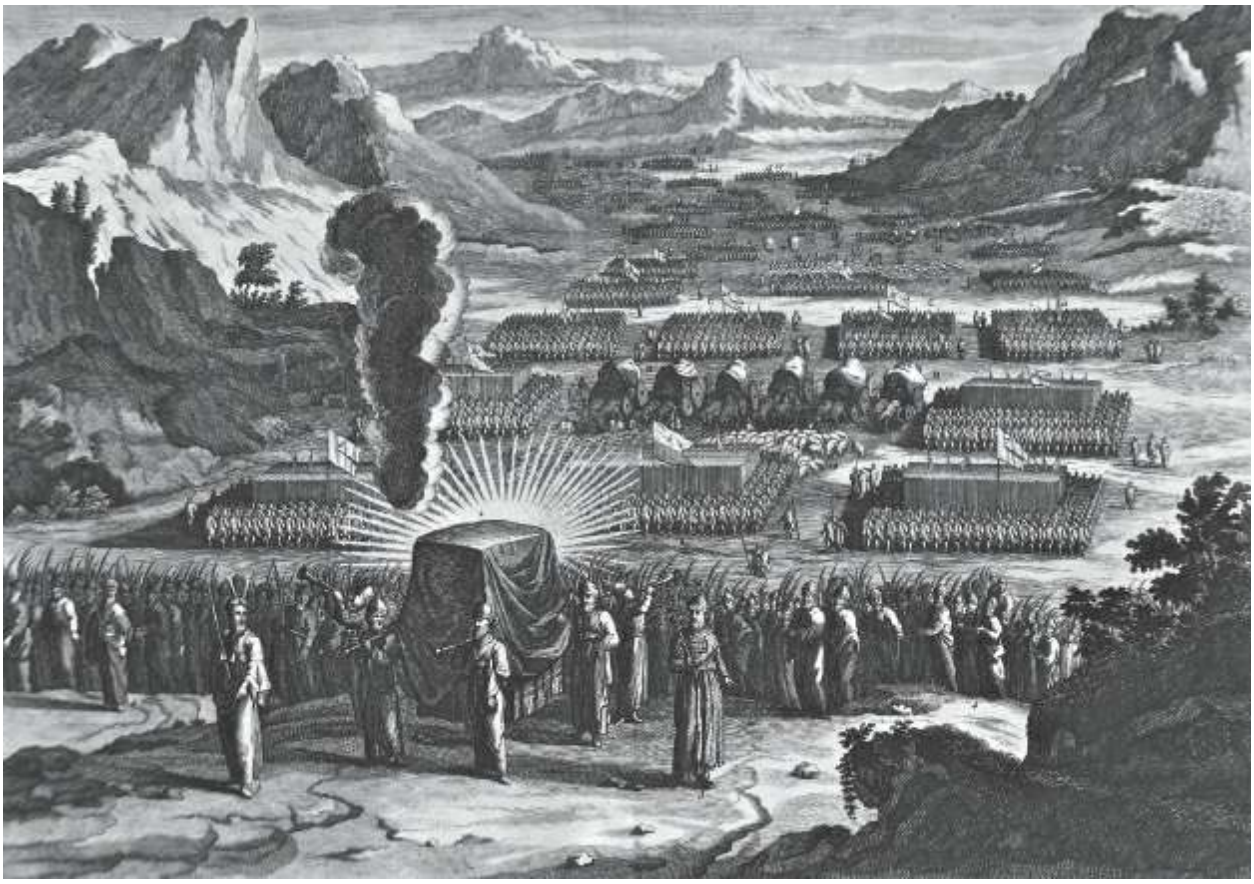


Figure 1.2 Moses alongside the Ark leads the twelve Hebrew tribes out of Egypt. Illustration from the biblical commentaries of Antoine Augustin Calmet (1672–1757).



Whether it was 600,000 people or 600 families, this vast and disorderly band is described as traveling eastwards out of Egypt and after three months coming to Mount Sinai,[20] the granite peak in the midst of the desert in the south-central Sinai Peninsula, close to the border of present day Israel. And Moses was summoned:

> Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying…Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.[21]

To the blare of a ram's horn *Yahweh* then appeared on the mountaintop out of fire and smoke and revealed to Moses the divine laws that would give moral order to the Hebrew. It would be the covenant between them and their God. As set down in Exodus, this covenant has both majesty and menace:

I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out

of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me;

This is certainly the God for whom Abraham would have killed his son:

and shewing mercy unto thousands, of them that love me and keep my commandments.

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Thou shalt do no murder.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.[22]

…the Ten Commandments. In Exodus this is followed with lists of many lesser, specific ordinances, moral precepts, and cultic regulations: “If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he come in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he be married, then his wife shall go out with him.”[23] On and on, in all exactly one hundred rules of social and religious behavior.

Far from being mysterious and theological, this most sacred of texts was, and still remains, a set of sensible, rational, and pragmatic laws for a civil society. Josephus noted that some “belong to our political state…concerning our common conversation and intercourse one with another.” Moses, in presenting the laws to the people emphasized their secular benefits, “I have… ordained you laws, by Divine suggestion, and a form of government, which are so good, that if you regularly observe them, you will be esteemed of all men the most happy.”.[24]

After the laws came a description of how this God would be worshiped:

> Ye shall not make other gods with me; gods of silver, or gods of gold, ye shall not make unto you. An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen…And if thou make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stones: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.[25]

Moses reported back to his people, then was once again summoned to the mountain; this time with his elders, and God appeared walking above their heads:

> and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the very heaven for clearness…And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee the tables of stone, and the law and the commandment, which I have written, that thou mayest teach them.[26]

Thus the law and commandments—the Covenant—which had previously been spoken by God, was inscribed in stone.

God then gave precise instructions for constructing the casket—the Ark—in which these most precious stones would be held, “And they shall make an

ark of acacia wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof." (45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high, quite small and entirely covered in gold.) "And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee."

And with the protection of two strange creatures God would come to earth above this casket, "And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof." It would form the lid of the casket, and "I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim…of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."[27] Josephus explained that Cherubim, "are flying creatures, but their form is not like to that of any of the creatures which men have seen, though Moses said he had seen such beings near the throne of God."[28] Moses would have seen their like in the tombs in the Valley of the Nile. In their most ancient form Cherubim were celestial beings and although their bodies were human, their heads, though sometimes human, could also be those of birds or dogs. These strange creatures recall the mysterious figures that spread their great wings over the coffins of the dead in the Egypt of Ramses II; they were the throne bearers of the deity.

Moses is recorded as being with God on the mountain for forty days and forty nights: too long an absence. He returned to find many gathered in the act of worshiping a golden calf, presumably the Egyptian bull god *Apis*. Outraged he had 3000 slaughtered, and smashed the tablets containing the Covenant: the dreadful consequence of not obeying the commandments. Moses would not be the one to incur the wrath of such a "jealous God."

Such harsh measures and the theatrical hoopla around the divine appearances seem to reflect immense struggle to control and impose laws and a moral code on a disparate, displaced people as the Exodus moved northwards out of Egypt. It would be the laws of the Covenant, rather than racial kinship that would over time form the distinct character of the Hebrew people.

Yahweh was patient, and soon came to Moses again:

> And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the first

> tables, which thou brakest. And be ready by the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me on the top of the mount…[Then the warning] Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been wrought in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD, for it is a terrible thing that I do with thee…for thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:[29]

After the laws of the Covenant were again inscribed in the stone and the Ark built to hold them, Josephus records God offering Moses a glimpse of the Promised Land:

> When you have possessed yourselves of the land of Canaan, and have leisure to enjoy the good things of it, and when you have afterward determined to build cities, if you will do what is pleasing to God, you will have a secure state of happiness. Let there be then one city of the land of Canaan, and this situate in the most agreeable place for its goodness, and very eminent in itself, and let it be that which God shall choose for himself by prophetic revelation.

Then a temple was imagined—only one temple:

> Let there also be one temple therein, and one altar, not reared of hewn stones, but of such as you gather together at random; which stones, when they are whited over with mortar, will have a handsome appearance, and be beautiful to the sight. Let the ascent to it be not by steps but by an acclivity of raised earth. And let there be neither an altar nor a temple in any other city; for God is but one, and the nation of the Hebrews is but one.[30]

This comes from *Antiquities*; as Moses' life was ending he offers final instructions on law and order. Titled “The Polity Settled by Moses” it does not appear in the Old Testament, though Josephus would have drawn it from some source familiar in his time. The instruction continues—until such a city was found and a temple built, the Ark of the Covenant must have a home, albeit a tent. As with his instructions for the making of the casket to hold the Covenant, God was equally specific, not only as to the form this tent should take, but in selecting those who would build it:

> Now when these things were brought together with great diligence he set architects over the works, and this by the command of God; they were significant enough to be named and remembered…Now their names are set down in writing in the sacred books; and they were these: *Besaleel*, the son of Uri, of the tribe of Judah, *Aholiab*, son of *Ahisamach* the tribe of Dan…and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee.[31]

Then follows a list of the equipment with which to furnish this tent or tabernacle of the congregation:

> and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy-seat that is thereupon, and all the furniture of the Tent; and the table and its vessels, and the pure candlestick with all its vessels, and the altar of incense; and the altar of burnt offering with all its vessels, and the laver and its base; and the finely wrought garments, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office; and the anointing oil, and the incense of sweet spices for the holy place: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do.[32]

And all joined together to provide the precious materials from which it would be built:

> HEREUPON the Israelites rejoiced at what they had seen and heard… they brought silver, and gold, and brass, and of the best sorts of wood, and such as would not at all decay by putrefaction; camels' hair also, and sheep-skins, some of them dyed of a blue color, and some of a scarlet; some brought the flower for the purple color, and others for white, with wool dyed by the flowers aforementioned; and fine linen and precious stones, which those that use costly ornaments set in ouches [clasps] of gold; they brought also a great quantity of spices; for of these materials did Moses build the tabernacle.[33]

Such sumptuous description compels the imagination. The Ark was placed in a tent, the “Tabernacle,” which sat within a court 150 feet long by 75 feet wide (see Figure 1.3). This was formed by an extensive fabric wall, “a curtain of fine soft linen went round all the pillars, and hung down in a flowing and loose manner from their (capitals), and enclosed the whole space, and seemed not at all unlike to a wall about it.” This covered three sides of the court. On

the fourth the eastern face, was a gate 30 feet wide, screened by a curtain "composed of purple, and scarlet, and blue…and embroidered with many and divers sorts of figures, excepting the figures of animals." No animals and no human forms, it was so commanded, "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them."[34] This God, unlike others, would assume no earthly form.

Figure 1.3 Constructing the wall of the Tabernacle: a bird's-eye view. *Physica Sacra: De constructie van de wanden van de tabernakel*. J. C. Scheuchzer, 1731–1735.

The Tabernacle containing the Ark sat at the western end of the court. It was 15 feet wide by 45 feet long, its sides formed from dense rows of twenty columns, which “had rings of gold affixed to their fronts outward…through which were inserted bars gilded over with gold.” They formed a wall of gold

such “that the tabernacle might not be shaken, either by the winds, or by any other means, but that it might preserve itself quiet and immovable continually…” It would always face east “so that, when the sun arose, it might send its first rays upon it.” Inside it “Moses parted its length into three partitions.”

> Now the whole temple was called The Holy Place: but that part which was within…and to which none were admitted, was called The Holy of Holies. This veil was very ornamental, and embroidered with all sorts of flowers which the earth produces; and there were interwoven into it all sorts of variety that might be an ornament, excepting [once again] the forms of animals.[35]

And in front of the Holy of Holies was a table,[36] “Upon this table…were laid twelve unleavened loaves of bread” and nearby a candlestick of cast gold:

> It was made with its knops, and lilies, and pomegranates, and bowls…by which means the shaft elevated itself on high from a single base, and spread itself into as many branches as there are planets, including the sun among them. It terminated in seven heads, in one row, all standing parallel to one another; and these branches carried seven lamps, one by one, in imitation of the number of the planets.[37]

An embroidered richly colored curtain covered the entrance, over which was a veil of linen of the same size that could be opened and closed. When open it gave a “view of the sanctuary, especially on solemn days…on other days, and especially when the weather was inclined to snow, it might be expanded, and afford a covering to the veil of divers colors.” Imagine this fragile assembly appearing through a sandstorm. The inner surface of the tent was fabric, the outer of animal skins, which “afforded covering and protection to those that were woven both in hot weather and when it rained. And great was the surprise of those who viewed these…at a distance, for they seemed not at all to differ from the color of the sky.” The skins must have been bleached white, dissolving into the sky in the intense light of the sun. Moses had set the stage not only to the rites and rituals demanded by this singular God, but the idea and form of the temple that would be built on Mount Moriah.

This long, low wall of fine cloth protecting the sacred tent against the rough desert landscape was always placed some distance from the encampment as the tribes moved toward Canaan. It would have become a compelling symbol of order and confidence on this restless journey. It was a rational structure; yet abstract (Figure 1.3). The wall of the veils that formed the long enclosure would have seemed to float above the landscape. With the decision to strike camp there would have been elaborate ritual; the removal and wrapping of all the instruments of sacrifice, the screening and protection of the divine chest and its winged guardians poised on the lid protecting the mercy-seat. Was it allowed to be seen or was it hidden even from the priests entrusted with carrying it? Taking down and folding the skins and fabrics; removing the hundred or more posts and placing them on wagons, would all have been performed with great solemnity. One can assume that the procession of the wagons carrying the precious cargo was surrounded by priests, and, in the vanguard, heavily armed soldiers ready to defend to the last.

Moses did not live long enough to take his people into Canaan. After his death the task of leading the exodus fell to Joshua[38] and the journey continued. Joshua was named in Numbers as one of the twelve spies Moses sent out to survey the land ahead; he knew the way. And, as they marched, the Ark would have been more closely guarded, for it had become known to carry not only divine laws, but also destructive power; it had become a weapon of war. It was Joshua who captured Canaan and distributed its lands to the twelve tribes, and Joshua who set his army against Jericho. And it was the Ark—not the trumpets—that brought down the walls of Jericho:

> so they went round the city again, the ark going before them, and the priests encouraging the people to be zealous in the work; and when they had gone round it seven times, and had stood still a little, the wall fell down, while no instruments of war, nor any other force, was applied to it by the Hebrews.[39]

These were restless times as the twelve tribes became insinuated into the land and culture of Canaan. Joshua chose as his base “the city of Shiloh… because of the beauty” of its situation and there gave the tents and veils of the Tabernacle a permanent setting until such times as “their affairs would permit them to build a temple.” Soon the power of the Ark was to be tested again. When a Hebrew town was attacked by the Philistines, the people called on

the high priest in Shiloh to bring the Ark to their defense,

> but when the battle was joined…they found that they had put their trust in the Ark in vain, for they were presently beaten as soon as they came to a close fight with their enemies, and lost about thirty thousand men, among whom were the sons of the high priest; but the Ark was carried away by the enemies.[40]

The Ark however, brought misery and disaster to its captors, the people of Askelon, who:

> sent it away from themselves to others: nor did it stay among those others neither; for since they were pursued by the same disasters, they still sent it to the neighboring cities; so that the Ark went round, after this manner, to the five cities of the Philistines, as though it exacted these disasters as a tribute to be paid it for its coming among them.[41]

Eventually it was returned to Shiloh and there it would rest for two centuries.

King David

In his years in power—c. 1000–c. 960 BCE—King David succeeded in uniting the tribes of Judea into a single nation. He captured the Canaanite city of Jerusalem[42] and made it his capital. He rededicated the sacred altar[43] of the Canaanites on Mount Zion[44] to Yahweh, and immediately arranged to bring the Ark and its Tabernacle from Shiloh. The presence of the Ark would confirm the divine authority of his rule.

Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem proved to be fraught with danger. Josephus wrote of a great procession beginning well enough, “Before [the Ark] went the king and the whole multitude of the people with him singing hymns to God.” The book of Samuel added an orchestra “And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD with all manner of instruments made of fir wood, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with castanets, and with cymbals.”[45] Then disaster, someone touched the Ark's golden surface and was instantly destroyed—by God. All were afraid, and the Ark was left outside Jerusalem for three months. Finally, confidence

regained, King David once again led the Ark in procession the last few miles into the city.

> He transferred the ark to his own house; the priests carrying it, while seven companies of singers…went before it, and while he himself played upon the harp, and joined in the music, insomuch, that when his wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, who was our first king, saw him so doing, she laughed at him."

This, from Josephus, suggests that Michal found the king's performance ridiculous. The book of Samuel gives a distinctly different impression:

> So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. And it was so, as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out at the window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place, in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.[46]

Michal "despised him in her heart," for leaping and dancing before the Lord. It must have been an extravagant show.

King David housed the Ark on Mount Zion in his version of the tent enclosure so carefully described in Exodus. The Ark within became the locus of all worship of the peoples of Judea, drawing pilgrims to Jerusalem on high days and holy days, at which time it would be carried in splendid procession through the city. The divine laws it contained confirmed that they were the chosen people of the one true God, Yahweh.

The book of Samuel reports that God told David he was tired of living in a tent and wanted a proper house:

> Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? for I have not dwelt in an house since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. [there is wit in this God.]…And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. And David went up according to the saying of Gad, as the LORD commanded. And Araunah looked forth,

> and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshing-floor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD…[47]

Araunah offered to give David the land and the ploughs and the oxen, the king replied:

> but I will verily buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God which cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.[48]

Though the desire was to build a Temple, the immediate reason for buying the land was to build an altar to receive sacrifice that would end a plague in the land. The threshing floor sat on the top of Mount Moriah just north of the city of David in Jerusalem. Josephus was in no doubt that this was the very place "that Abraham came and offered his son Isaac for a burnt-offering… and he resolved to call that entire place 'The Altar of all the People,' and to build a temple to God there." Building the Temple over the place where Abraham had offered to sacrifice Isaac, would marry Mount Moriah forever to the creation of the people of Israel. (However, there is no evidence even within the earliest forms of the Hebrew Bible of any connection between "Mount Moriah" and the "land of Moriah."[49])

David bought the land on which the Temple would rise, but God would not allow him to build. In Chronicles David spoke:

> it was in mine heart to build an house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God; and I had made ready for the building. But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood…Solomon thy son, he shall build my house and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father.[50]

His sin was to have shed the blood of his most trusted servant Uriah in his lust for Bathsheba. He was, however, allowed to set out the plans for the

temple, order the materials, and hire the labor:

> he appointed fourscore thousand to be hewers of stone, and the rest of the multitude to carry the stones…. He also prepared a great quantity of iron and brass for the work, with many (and those exceeding large) cedar trees…. And he told his friends that these things were now prepared, that he might leave materials ready for the building of the temple to his son, who was to reign after him, and that he might not have them to seek then, when he was very young, and by reason of his age unskillful in such matters [51]

> Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch of the temple, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper rooms thereof, and of the inner chambers thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat: and the pattern of all that he had by the spirit, for the courts of the house of the LORD, and for all the chambers round about, for the treasuries of the house of God, and for the treasuries of the dedicated things.[52]

The second book of Chronicles states that Solomon began to build the Temple at Jerusalem in Mount Moriah "…in the place that David had appointed, in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite."[53]

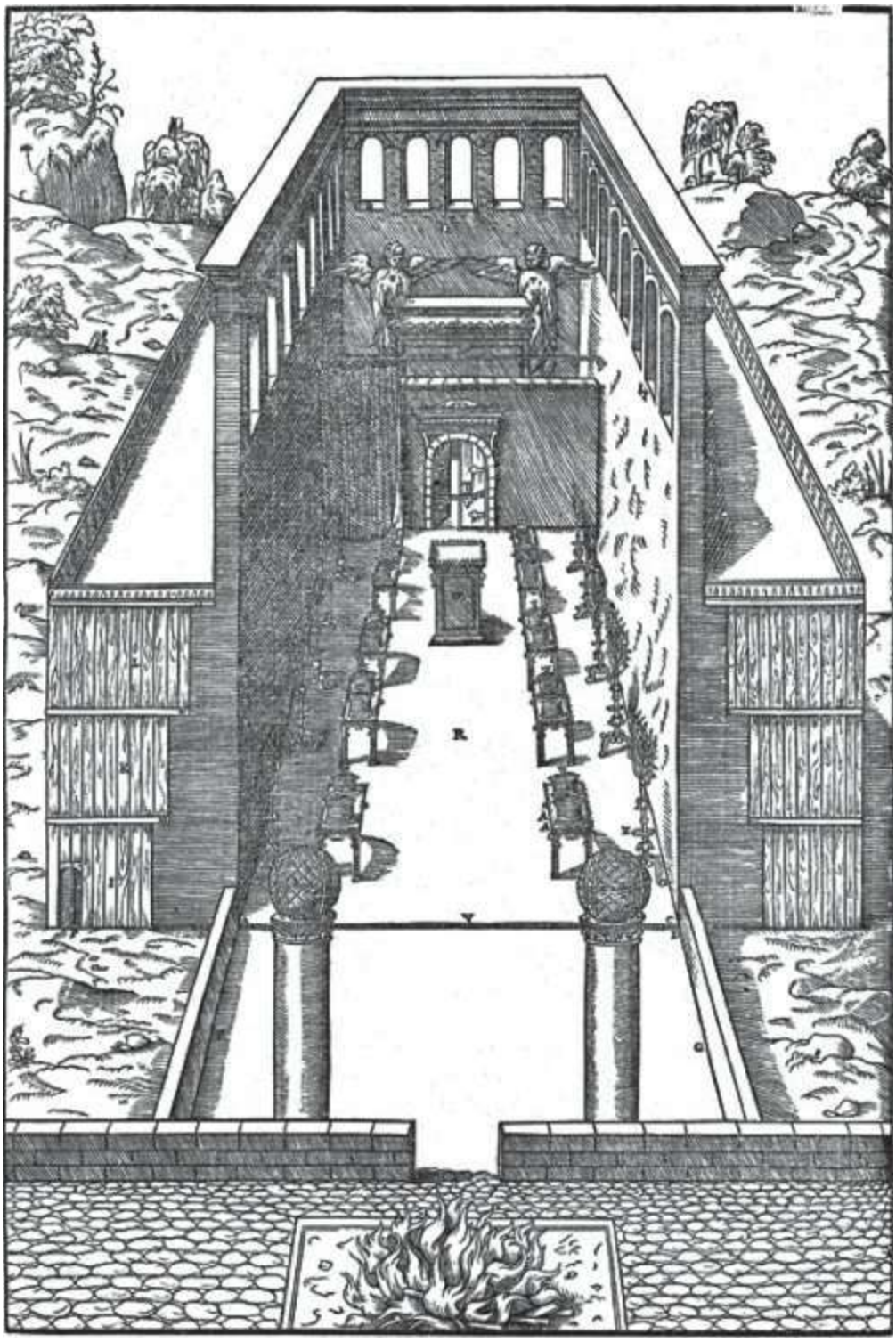
The Temple of Solomon

Solomon was no less a warrior than his father David, and built an empire before building the Temple: an empire that produced wealth and led to a vast building program to fortify its borders and cities.[54] He began by restoring the walls of Jerusalem, behind which he built his palace, "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month *Ziv*, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD."[55] It would be the house of a powerful God and a symbol of a powerful king.

The Old Testament book of Kings offers a clear but rather basic description: the Temple, entered though a colonnade that ran its full width was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 45 feet high. Josephus knew the biblical

descriptions yet offered a grandly different description. He began by emphasizing the strength of the building: it had “to be so strong, in order to sustain with ease those vast superstructures and precious ornaments, whose own weight was to be not less than the weight of those other high and heavy buildings which the king designed to be very ornamental and magnificent.” He gave its height and length both as 60 cubits—90 feet—then added that “There was another building erected over it, equal to it in its measures; so that the entire altitude of the temple was a hundred and twenty cubits.”[56] Between Josephus' estimate of 180 feet and the more reasonable 45 feet in Kings it would seem wise to prefer the biblical evidence (Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4 Bird's-eye view of the interior of Solomon's Temple. Franciscus Vatablus. From the Latin Estienne Bible, Paris 1540.



All was built in the white stone that marks Jerusalem into the present, and the perfection of the walls was such, Josephus wrote, “that there appeared to the spectators no sign of any hammer, or other instrument of architecture; but as if, without any use of them, the entire materials had naturally united

themselves together."

Into the Temple and into the Holy of Holies. In Kings "Solomon… prepared an oracle in the midst of the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD. And within the oracle was a space of twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof [a 30-feet cube]; and he overlaid it with pure gold." And surrounding the Ark "he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits high (15 feet)," two giant golden figures standing guard on either side of the Ark, each stretching their wings to the full extent, meeting in the middle and touching the walls on either side—consuming the space: "And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, within and without."[57]

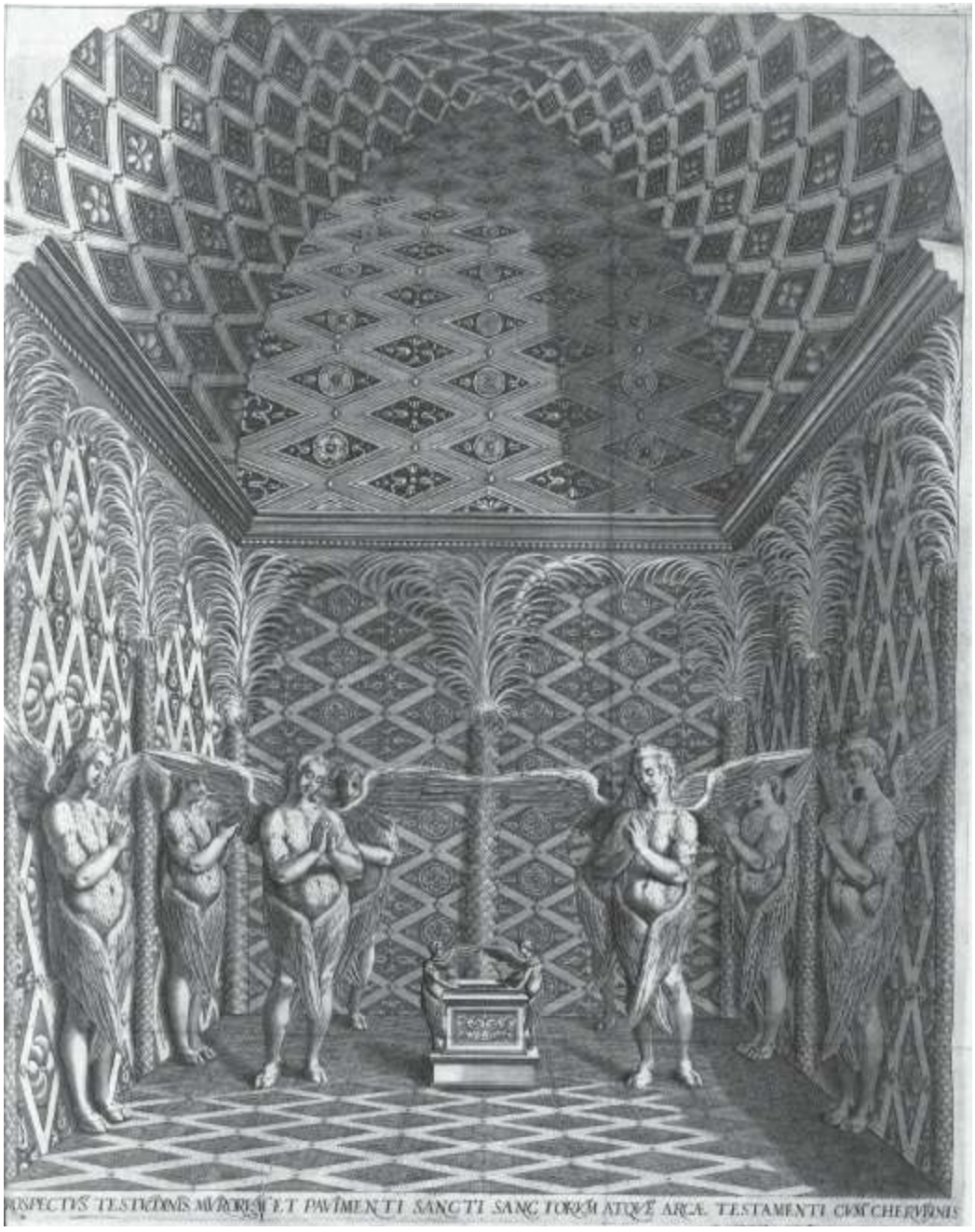
Into the same space with Josephus:

> the most secret chamber; two cherubims of solid gold…Solomon set them up not far from each other, that with one wing they might touch the southern wall of the secret place, and with another the northern: their other wings, which joined to each other, were a covering to the ark.[58]

This most secret chamber was seen and known only through what the priests chose to tell. The two kneeling figures on the lid of the Ark from the Exodus had been transformed into two standing giants, 15 feet high, bisecting the space and looming over the priests, consuming the room above the golden surfaces of the simple box containing the Ark. The outstretched wings touched in the middle and stretched from wall to wall, two fearsome creatures (Figure 1.5). As with the Cherubim that guarded the Ark for Moses, these also seem to owe much to the art of the Pharaohs. Standing winged figures appeared in frescoes and bas-reliefs from Egypt in the centuries before Solomon built the temple, often guarding tombs. Their presence does raise the question of how they avoided God's injunction against making "for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath." This could explain the disclaimer in the writing of Josephus, who was rabbi and would have been sensitive to this issue, where he notes "that nobody can tell, or even conjecture what was the shape of these cherubims." Imagine these angelic giants, throne-bearers of the deity with the heads of birds. And the holy chamber was furnished exactly as it had been prescribed by Moses; the candlestick of gold, the table for the

bread, and, in between, the golden altar.

Figure 1.5 Cherubims, Guardians of the Ark, after *Descriptio seu ichnographia veteris urbis Hierusalem*. Bernard Lamy, Paris 1720. Universidad de Sevilla.



The sanctuary occupying the remaining 60 feet was dressed in “veils of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and the brightest and softest linen, with the most curious flowers wrought upon them.” Josephus and the authors of Kings both

praised and named the woods used and the metal workers who fashioned the decoration on the capitals that crowned the columns. Capitals with luscious decoration “round about which there was net-work interwoven with small palms, made of brass, and covered the lily-work. To this also were hung two hundred pomegranates, in two rows.”

Josephus wrote of the equipment in the court in front of the sanctuary, the baths for cleansing, the altar for the burnt sacrifice, and, at the center, the vast basin in brass carried on the backs of twelve crouching oxen, surrounded by smaller basins which gave the appearance of being on wheels, all for washing the hands and the feet of the priests before they ascended to the altar. Dominating all was the great brazen altar, 30 feet square—the width of the temple—raised 15 feet above the ground, to receive and burn the offerings for sacrifice.

The building complete, the Ark was carried in procession by the priests on long wooden staves, out of the Tabernacle on Mount Zion, into the valley below, and up the steep slope to Mount Moriah.

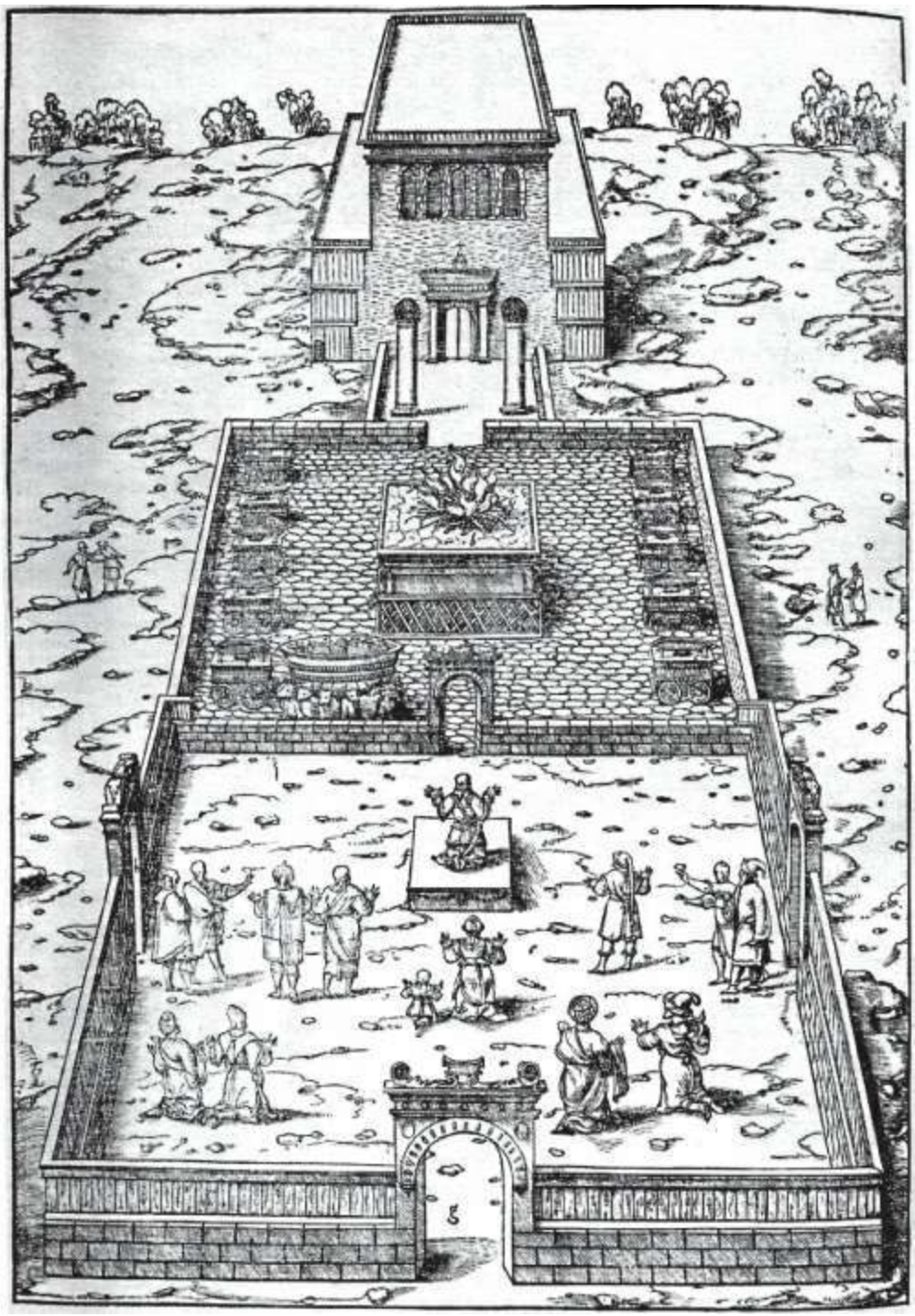
> And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent…And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto its place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread forth their wings over the place of the ark…There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at *Horeb*, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.[59]

Writing almost a thousand years later, Josephus imagined the scene “the whole temple shined, and dazzled the eyes of such as entered, by the splendor of the gold that was on every side of them”. It was the largest and most majestic object in Judea and it could have borne comparison with the temples of Egypt, or the more ancient structures of Mesopotamia.

As with the tents of Moses' Tabernacle, this was a rational structure, its power coming from the perfection and the scale of its massive walls (Figure 1.6). Two elements helped in giving clarity to its character, the first the

exceptional color and quality of the white stone of Jerusalem, the other, though more tenuous, its derivation from the highly systemized temporary structures of Moses' Tabernacle. This series of lightweight structures would have been refined over centuries of assembly and disassembly; rational by necessity, abstract by never being tied to any one place.

Figure 1.6 Solomon's Temple. Franciscus Vatablus. From the Latin Estienne Bible Paris 1540.



The prophetic writings collected under the name of Isaiah were composed from the eighth to the sixth century BCE, and perhaps even later. They arose out of the moral decline of the people and the real threat of invasion from the east. They are in three distinct parts: the first predicts the destruction of Jerusalem: “your cities are burned with fire; your land, strangers devour it in

your presence, and it is desolate."[60] However, the second offers a vision of renewal: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it…for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations."[61] Both fears would be realized.[62] The third section is thought to be from a later period and offers more commentary that prophecy, including the claim that God has no need of a temple because "The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"[63]

By the seventh century BCE the dynasty created by David and Solomon had faded; the religion had become corrupted. Solomon's temple to Yahweh had been converted to the worship of Baal, (Lord of the Earth and god of fertility), a favorite of the Canaanites. Baal demanded burnt sacrifices, sometimes human, and some kind of sexual performance, while the priests danced around the altars, chanting frantically and cutting themselves with knives, attracting divine attention and compassion. But the Ark had not been entirely forgotten. Around the year 600 BCE a copy of the Covenant was mysteriously found in the Temple and the priests used the laws to reform the social and religious life of Judah:

> And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that was found in the house of the LORD.[64]

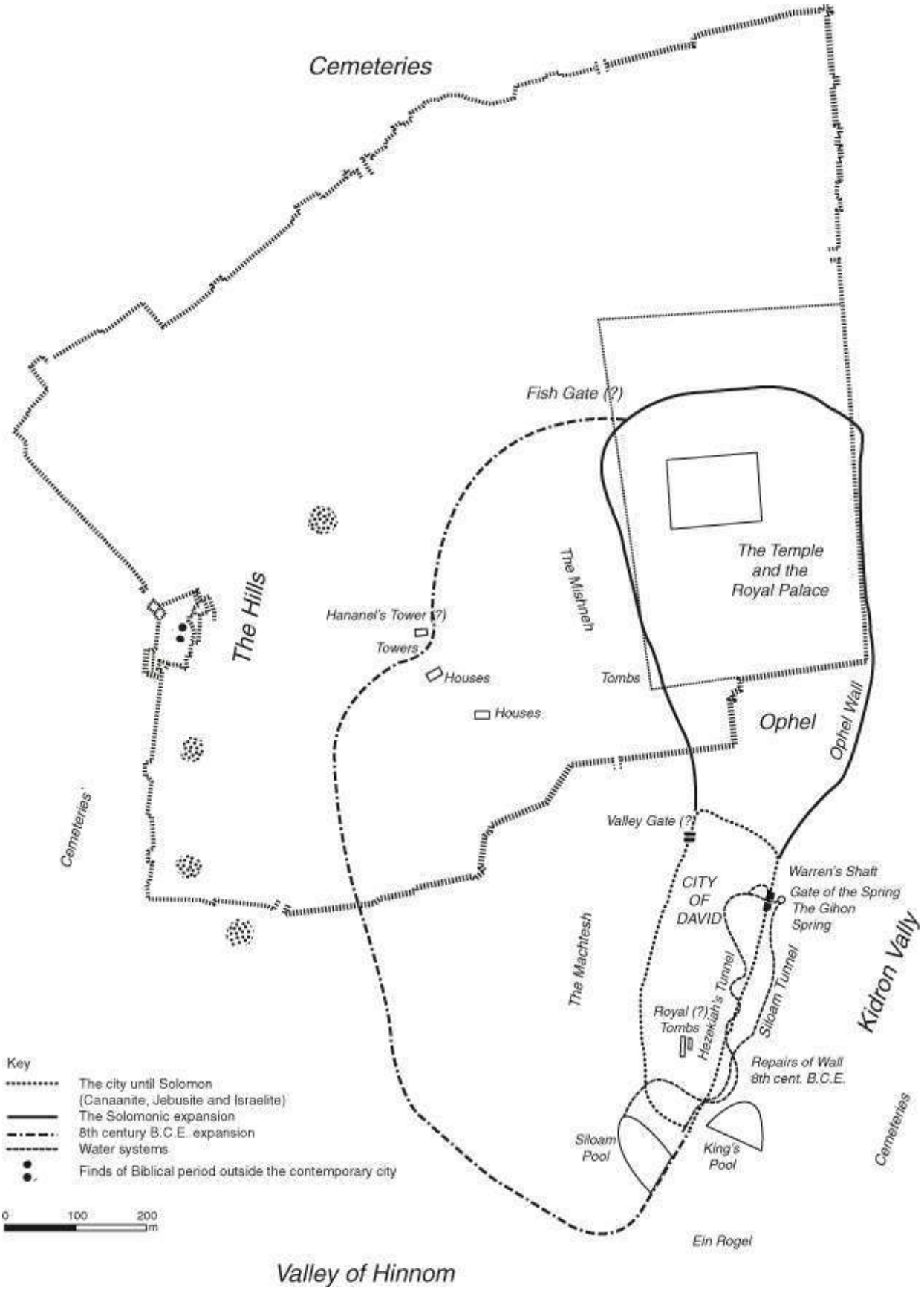
After spreading the word, the Temple itself had to be cleansed:

> And the king commanded *Hilkiah* the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, [the valley below Temple Mount] and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense…unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of

> heaven….And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the Asherah.[65]

All to no avail as the weakness of the nation attracted enemies (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.7 Jerusalem in the time of the First Temple.


Cemeteries
Fish Gate (?)
The Temple and the Royal Palace
The Hills
The Mishneh
Hananel's Tower (?)
Towers
Houses
Houses
Tombs
Ophel
Ophel Wall
Cemeteries
Valley Gate (?)
CITY OF DAVID
Warren's Shaft
Gate of the Spring
The Gihon Spring
The Machtesh
Royal (?) Tombs
Hezekiah's Tunnel
Siloam Tunnel
Kidron Valley
Repairs of Wall 8th cent. B.C.E.
Siloam Pool
King's Pool
Cemeteries
Ein Rogel
Key
The city until Solomon (Canaanite, Jebusite and Israelite)
The Solomonic expansion
8th century B.C.E. expansion
Water systems
Finds of Biblical period outside the contemporary city
0
100
200
m
Valley of Hinnom

Nebuchadnezzar II

Soon after, in 597 BCE, the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar II[66] attacked Judah, captured Jerusalem, and deported King Jehoiachin, the last royal descendant of David.

> At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came unto the city, while his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon…and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD.[67]

Nebuchadnezzar again laid siege in 587 and 586 BCE, and this time city and Temple were completely destroyed. From Josephus:

> Accordingly, he came to Jerusalem in the eleventh year of king Zedekiah, and pillaged the temple, and carried out the vessels of God, both gold and silver, and particularly that large laver which Solomon dedicated, as also the pillars of brass, and their chapters, [capitals] with the golden tables and the candlesticks; and when he had carried these off, he set fire to the temple…and in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar: he also burnt the palace, and overthrew the city. Now the temple was burnt four hundred and seventy years, six months, and ten days after it was built. But the general of the Babylonian king now overthrew the city to the very foundations, and removed all the people, and took for prisoners the high priest…and the rulers that guarded the temple.[68]

All were taken into exile to Babylon.

Unmentioned here or in any other record of the Babylonian invasion is the one aspect of these events that has come to dominate the historical memory—the removal and the subsequent disappearance of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark disappeared from the historical record long before the Babylonians invaded.

The prophet Ezekiel gave an intimate sense of the despair of exile. He is presumed to have been a priest of the Temple and was among those deported to Babylon in the first invasion. In his earliest writings he railed against Judea and foresaw God passing harsh judgment on Jerusalem for the worship of Baal and the monstrous practices still being performed in the courts of the Temple. To him Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the Temple was God's punishment.[69] From exile Ezekiel prophesied that there would be an act of divine grace and all would one day return to the city. He imagined God carrying him into the land of Israel and setting him upon a very high mountain from which he could look down on a city. He is then introduced to a strange poetic device, a brass figure of a man who is holding a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed. This figure proceeded to describe the Temple in all its exact dimensions and decorations: “on the doors of the temple, cherubim and palm trees, like as were made upon the walls.”[70] Nowhere, it should be noted, in this careful instruction that was intended to inspire the rebuilding of the Temple was there mention of the Ark of the Covenant. Then God spoke directly to Ezekiel:

> Thou, son of man, shew the house [the Temple] to the house [people] of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern. And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, make known unto them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the ordinances thereof…and all the laws thereof, and write it in their sight: that they may keep the whole form thereof…This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy [Mount Moriah]. Behold, this is the law of the house.[71]

This is both a prophecy and a call for the people of Israel to return and rebuild and be governed from the Temple.

The Babylonian exile ended in 538 BCE when the Persian King Cyrus freed the Jews and actively encouraged their return to Judea. On which Josephus wrote:

> In the first year of the reign of Cyrus which was the seventieth from the day that our people were removed out of their own land into Babylon,

> God commiserated the captivity and calamity of these poor people, according as he had foretold to them by Jeremiah the prophet, before the destruction of the city, that after they had served Nebuchadnezzar and his posterity, and after they had undergone that servitude seventy years, he would restore them again to the land of their fathers, and they should build their temple, and enjoy their ancient prosperity…He called for the most eminent Jews that were in Babylon, and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their own country, and to rebuild their city Jerusalem, and the temple of God, for that he would be their assistant, and that he would write to the rulers and governors that were in the neighborhood of their country of Judea, that they should contribute to them gold and silver for the building of the temple, and besides that, beasts for their sacrifices.[72]

In a letter which survives from *Antiquities*, Cyrus wrote to neighboring rulers to support his cause and added: “Moreover, I have also sent the vessels which king Nebuchadnezzar pillaged out of the temple…that they may have them carried to Jerusalem, and may restore them to the temple of God.” There was no indication of what such vessels were; no mention of the Ark.

The Temple would have been reconstructed soon after the return. It is recalled in the book of Ezra:

> And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off.[73]

This wailing came from the elders who had seen and known the great Temple of Solomon. For them this rebuilding was a monument to decline. This was the second Temple. Yet, sixty or so years after rebuilding the Temple, the city remained in ruins and sparsely populated—its walls collapsed, and it was defenseless. The book of Nehemiah offers the most poignant report of the state of Jerusalem around 440 BCE, a hundred years after the return. He wrote:

> certain men out of Judah [came]; and I asked them concerning the Jews… which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept.[74]

Nehemiah, though Jewish, was the cupbearer to the Persian king[75] with whom he shared his sadness about the fate of Jerusalem. The Persian king was moved and ordered Nehemiah to visit the city and give aid where possible. And he found the city as desolate as he had been told:

> Ye see the evil case that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. And I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also of the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build.[76]

And it was rebuilt and Nehemiah gives line after line the names of all those who helped and the parts of the city they reconstructed.

The high priest Ezra[77] continued rebuilding and reforming not only the city but all aspects of Jewish society to accord with the Torah. It was he who made religious law the unifying force in Jewish culture. He encouraged all into solemn covenant before God, to comply with the demands of the law forbidding mixed marriages, it was feared that intermarriage with foreigners would result in the loss of Jewish identity. He banned work on the Sabbath, and made all subscribe to an annual tax for the support of the Temple. Much later he was hailed as a second Moses. After Ezra nothing much is known of Palestine or of its southernmost district, Judea, until the coming of the Greeks.

In 167 BCE, Antiochus IV, also called Epiphanes the Mad, King of Syria, entered the city:

> the king came up to Jerusalem, and, pretending peace, he got possession of the city by treachery; at which time he spared not so much as those that admitted him into it, on account of the riches that lay in the temple; but, led by his covetous inclination…and in order to plunder its wealth, he ventured to break the league he had made.

> He left the temple bare, and took away the golden candlesticks, and the golden altar [of incense], and table [of shew-bread[78]], and the altar [of burnt-offering]; and did not abstain from even the veils, which were made of fine linen and scarlet. He also emptied it of its secret treasures, and left nothing at all remaining; and by this means cast the Jews into great lamentation, for he forbade them to offer those daily sacrifices which they used to offer to God, according to the law.
>
> And when the king had built an idol altar upon God's altar, he slew swine upon it, and so offered a sacrifice neither according to the law, nor the Jewish religious worship in that country. He also compelled them to forsake the worship which they paid their own God, and to adore those whom he took to be gods; and made them build temples, and raise idol altars in every city and village, and offer swine upon them every day. He also commanded them not to circumcise their sons, and threatened to punish any that should be found to have transgressed his injunction.[79]

The Syrian invasion came eight centuries after the building of Solomon's Temple; centuries during which it had been destroyed and poorly rebuilt, and faith in this once supreme God had been weakened.

The Syria of Antiochus was a strongly Hellenized culture, and the very visible and physical gods of the Greeks would have immediately posed a threat to the unseen God of the Jews. The Greek gods played endless capricious games across the heavens in a divine league far from the secular and pragmatic concerns of this God of the Jews. Apart from sacrifice, the God of the Jews demanded few complex rituals, made no mysterious promises, no mention of an afterlife and had never been given human form. Was this God too opaque to compete with the pantheon of spectacular gods that had been nurtured to perfection in the Greek imagination—gods able and ready to maintain the cosmos in perfect order if they were properly respected?

With the coming of Herod the struggle between the gods and the philosophies of Judaism and Hellenism changes the reality of Jerusalem and the nature of the Temple.

Notes

[1] Genesis 12: 1–2. The patriarchal history of the Jewish people is a compilation of ancient oral and written traditions believed to have been first brought together almost 3000 years ago.

[2] He was Samarian or Mesopotamian.

[3] Where still stands ruined the ziggurat dedicated to the moon god *Nanna* (*Sin*), the patron deity, the divine king.

[4] Abram “The Father [or God] Is Exalted”, who is later named Abraham “The Father of Many Nations.”

[5] Genesis 13: 17–18.

[6] Twentieth-century archeology has uncovered enough evidence of Abraham's journey from Ur to suggest that he may have settled in Hebron 600 miles to the west. It was a journey made some 3800 years ago. This land has now several names: Israel, Palestine, Gaza, West Bank, Jordan.

[7] Only legitimate son according to Jews and Christians, but Abraham already had a son, Ishmael, from his marriage to his servant Hagar.

[8] Genesis 22: 2.

[9] Genesis 22.

[10] Genesis 22: 17–18.

[11] Abraham came from a culture that worshiped many gods; in Canaan he would have experienced monolatry, the one supreme god El, among many who evolved the qualities of transcendence, power, and knowledge to become the “God of our fathers.”

[12] Josephus (Titus Flavius Josephus 37–100 CE) *Antiquities of the Jews* I 13:4 All the quotations from Josephus' *Antiquities*, and his *Wars of the Jews*, in this and succeeding chapters are from William Whiston's translations of 1737. Whiston (1667–1752) was a student of Newton, succeeding him as Lucasian Professor of mathematics at Cambridge, until removed for heresy for Arianism (not accepting that God was in three persons). His interest in the writings of Josephus grew out of his concern to understand the early church.

There are several websites offering the complete works of Josephus: the Project Gutenberg site, produced by David Widger and David Reed is by far the most accessible (www.gutenberg.org). The Loeb Classical Library has a much more recent translation, but the Whiston texts remain vivid.

For more on Josephus see note 41 of Chapter II.

[13] A name recorded in Egyptian inscriptions of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries.

[14] All tribes in Egypt and beyond were racially one.

[15] Exodus 1: 13–14.

[16] The most dramatic and ambitious monument was to his favored queen Nefertari, Abu Simbel. It is carved out of a vast rock escarpment rising along the Nile, its façade formed from ten vast figures in two groups, six standing and four seated—colossal images of Ramses II enthroned.

[17] Exodus 1: 11.

[18] Their success in creating an everlasting presence is most clearly seen in the presence of Tutankhamen in the world's imagination. An insignificant young man, who died at the age of 19, perhaps after a fall from a chariot, has been immortalized by the power of the ritualized reality of Egypt after the discovery of his tomb.

[19] This is one possible translation for a word that must have existed long before Moses.

[20] Mountain of Moses, or Mount Hareh; Hebrew *Har Sinai*, Arabic *Jabal Musa*.

[21] Exodus 19: 3–6.

[22] Exodus 20: 2–17.

[23] Exodus 21: 2.

[24] *Antiquities* IV: 8.

[25] Exodus 20: 23.

[26] Exodus 24: 10–12.

[27] Exodus 25: 10–22.

[28] *Antiquities* III: 5.

[29] Exodus 34: 1–14.

[30] *Antiquities* IV: 8, 5

[31] *Antiquities* III: 6, 1.

[32] Exodus 31: 7–11.

[33] *Antiquities* III: 6, 1.

[34] Exodus 20: 4.

[35] *Antiquities* III: 6, 4.

[36] Josephus wrote that “it is like those at Delphi”: a surprisingly anachronistic reference to the Greek oracle.

[37] *Antiquities* III: 6, 7

[38] *Yehoshua* meaning ”Yahweh Is Deliverance,” from the end of the twelfth century BCE.

[39] *Antiquities*-V: 1, 27.

[40] *Antiquities*-V: 11, 2.

[41] *Antiquities* VI: 1, 2.

[42] From the word *Jebusite* a mixture of peoples.

[43] *El* was the principal deity of the Canaanites.

[44] In Isaiah 8: 18, Psalms 2: 6 and Psalms 74: 2: Mount Zion where Yahweh, the God of Israel, installed his king, David. Josephus placed Mount Zion on the west of the city but in the last century it has been identified as being the eastern hill—modern Ophel.

[45] II Samuel 6: 5.

[46] II Samuel 6: 15–17.

[47] II Samuel 7: 5–6 and 24: 18–21.

[48] II Samuel 24: 24–25.

[49] In Hebrew *Moriah* has the meaning “Ordained by God,” and in the King James translation of the Bible the name appears twice; yet nowhere is there any explicit connection between them. It appears first in Genesis 22:2 as an instruction to Abraham “And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of *Moriah*; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” Then again in II Chronicles 3: 1: “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount *Moriah*, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.” Furthermore, in the oldest translations from Hebrew into the Greek there is no mention of Moriah in Genesis and in Chronicles the reference is to Mount *Amoria*. Thus the textual evidence is of no help in confirming that Solomon built his Temple

in the place of Abraham's sacrifice.

[50] I Chronicles 28: 2–6.

[51] *Antiquities* VII: 14, 1

[52] I Chronicles 28: 11–12.

[53] II Chronicles 3: 1.

[54] At first the laborers were the Canaanites, but eventually all the men of the nation gave one month in three to the task.

[55] Kings 6: 1.

[56] *Antiquities* VIII: 3, 2.

[57] I Kings 6: 19–29.

[58] *Antiquities* VIII: 3, 3.

[59] I Kings 8: 4–7, 9.

[60] Isaiah 1: 7.

[61] Isaiah 2: 2–3. It continues with the immortal passage “and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

[62] Some of these writings are not prophecies, but written after the fact.

[63] Isaiah 66: 1–2.

[64] II Chronicles: 34, 30.

[65] II Kings23: 4–7.

[66] The greatest of the kings of Babylonia, who reigned c. 605–c. 561 BCE.

[67] II Kings 24: 10–13.

[68] *Antiquities* X: 8, 5.

[69] Despite the destruction and exile, Nebuchadnezzar viewed is with some favor in Jewish history.

[70] Ezekiel 41: 25.

[71] Ezekiel 43: 10–12.

[72] *Antiquities* XI: 1, 1–2.

[73] Ezra 3: 11–13.

[74] Nehemiah 1: 2–4.

[75] Judea was under Persian administration.

[76] Nehemiah 2: 17.

[77] Though the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are linked in the Bible, they were not contemporaries. Nehemiah is believed to have preceded Ezra by some 30 or 40 years.

[78] Literally, shew-bread, the “showbread,” is *lechem ha'panim*, that is, “bread of the face”—or, “bread of the Presence (of God).”

[79] *Antiquities* XII: 5, 4.

Chapter 2

Herod

Jerusalem had first come within the Greek sphere of influence in 332 BCE, when Alexander the Great captured Palestine and made it part of the kingdom of Ptolemaic Egypt. More than a century later, in 198 BCE, Palestine came under the control of King Antiochus III,[1] and the Seleucid Empire. Antiochus allowed relative self-government in the nations under his control, but actively promoted Greek culture and language, with the result that in the first decades of the second century BCE Hellenism had become deeply ingrained within Jewish society, particularly among the wealthy. This was not only in manners and dress, but also in philosophies, politics, and to some degree, religion. Hellenism, that range of ideals that evolved and were refined within the cultures of ancient Greece—the perfection of the mind and body, a commitment to reason, moderation, and civic duty—only came into serious opposition with Judaism over the nature of the gods. (In the histories of this period the Bible refers to all non-Jews as either Greek or Gentile.)

Antiochus IV[2] came to the throne in 175 BCE and reigned until his death in 164. In his youth he had lived in Rome[3] and been deeply impressed by the effectiveness of Roman military and political ways. During his reign Jewish society became increasingly divided between the traditionalists, believers in the God of Moses and the laws of the Covenant, and the Hellenes, lovers of all things Greek. The traditionalists believed that God had created man, not man the gods, and that the people of Israel had been chosen by God to be “a light unto the nations,”[4] to create an ordered society ruled not by force and greed, but by justice and love. Antiochus, in contrast, believed he was “God Manifest” and wished to be compared with that most ancient deity Baal (in the distant past a rival to Yahweh among the Jews). His own divinity did not limit his belief in the efficacy of the many personal gods in the Roman and Greek pantheon. He could neither understand nor accept the Jewish

obedience to an unseen God, a “god of words.”

In 173 BCE, the king, encouraged by the Jewish Hellenes, chose Jason to be high priest of the Temple. Within three years he renamed Jerusalem “Antioch at Jerusalem”[5] and began a program of reorganization that would give the city the physical structures and the administration to support the institutions and the entertainments of Hellenic life: a theater, stadium, gymnasium and *palaestra* (wrestling school). The *palaestra* was most exciting for the youth of the city.

A complete though partisan history of these times is contained in the books of the Maccabees,[6] the annals of the family of traditionalist Jews who lead a violent and successful rebellion against the king and his Hellene supporters, whom they called the Gentiles. These are thought to be some of the oldest translations of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, and are viewed by some as apocrypha. The texts are very direct: from Maccabees II–

> When Seleucus died and Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, succeeded to the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias obtained the high priesthood by corruption, promising the king at an interview three hundred sixty talents of silver, and from another source of revenue eighty talents.[7]

He then paid the king to be allowed to build the gymnasium:

> In addition to this he promised to pay one hundred and fifty more if permission were given to establish by his authority a gymnasium and a body of youth for it, and to enroll the people of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch.[8]

Given the king's pleasure in things Greek, a bribe would hardly have seemed necessary.

For the Maccabees this was seen as but the first act in a plan to “shift [the king's] compatriots over to the Greek way of life.

> He set aside the existing royal concessions to the Jews…he destroyed the lawful ways of living and introduced new customs contrary to the law. He took delight in establishing a gymnasium right under the citadel and induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat [the *pilos*, which was brimless and close fitting to the head, still seen in the Middle East].[9]

So successful was Jason, and so enjoyable the ways of the Greeks, that within a short time:

> priests were no longer intent upon their service at the altar. Despising the sanctuary and neglecting the sacrifices, they hurried to take part in the unlawful proceedings in the wrestling arena…disdaining the honors prized by their ancestors and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige.[10]

This meant favoring competition in the games above the ritual of worship and sacrifice; and more profoundly, celebrating the perfection the body above the purity of the soul.

An even more pointed version appears in Maccabees I:

> Antiochus…began to reign in the one hundred and thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks[11]. In those days lawless men came forth from Israel, and misled many, saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles round about us, for since we separated from them many evils have come upon us,"…and some of the people eagerly went to the king. He authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant.[12]

Circumcision was an intimate impediment to the desire of Jewish youths to be truly Greek. As the men of the city prepared for the games, they would exercise in the nude, and being thus exposed, would show the distinct mark of their religion. This was the mark demanded by God of Abraham from the first command of the Pentateuch: "And God said unto Abraham…This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised." The punishment for disobeying—"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised. That soul shall be cut off from his people."[13] The Greeks among them, believing that perfecting the body was an equally divine obligation, were much disturbed by the sight: it was a barbaric abuse of the body. In the uneasy and anxious confusion of cultures, many Hellenic Jews sought surgical help to "remove the marks of circumcision." These young athletes risked all. They risked all because they wished to experience all. Though their city was provincial, trade brought fashions and art, traveling

players brought theater and poetry, and the athletes moved from games to games and brought back tales of the pleasures of Athens and the emerging grandeur of Rome.

Jason was deposed for being too moderate, and the Temple came into the control of an elite seeking full adoption of Greek ways, causing a deep rift with the majority who supported a more moderate position. It was civil war, and Antiochus joined the conflict in support of the Hellenes. In 167 BCE he entered Jerusalem with a strong army and, with force, seized the Temple.

> He arrogantly entered the sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lamp stand for the light, and all its utensils. He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures which he found.[14]

Consider the worldview of this king: far to the north was his capital, Antioch, named for his father, one of the great cities of the ancient world. Across his dominion the gods of the Greeks dominated all worship. Their temples were everywhere; many vast in size,[15] as was their due. Their efficacy in ensuring the victories of the king and the prosperity of his people was self-evident. Why should he not demand that all his subjects be so comforted?

> Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, and that each should give up his customs. All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many, even from Israel, gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the Sabbath.[16]

Then the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah: Antiochus was intent on destroying the religion of Abraham and Moses. The letters called for the banning of “burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary.” Priests would be forced to build altars and shrines for idols in the very human form of the gods of Greece. Sons were to remain uncircumcised. They concluded, “whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die.” These actions were quickly followed by the arrival of an Athenian senator on the king's orders “to compel the Jews to forsake the laws of their ancestors and no longer to live by the laws of God.”

The Jews must live by the laws of the Greeks.

On the king's orders the second Temple on Mount Moriah, then over 300 years old, was renamed for god Zeus;[17] the king among the gods of the Greek pantheon. Not only renamed, but reequipped and restaged to provide the setting for priests in performance. That once forbidden and empty space at the heart of its sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, may well have housed a grandly sculpted figure of Zeus. Most certainly, a figure of the God would have been erected in front of the Temple for all to see. The rituals demanded by Zeus had roots as ancient as the God of Moses, but to the scribes of the Maccabeans they were obscene:

> For the temple was filled with debauchery and reveling by the gentiles, who dallied with prostitutes and had intercourse with women within the sacred precincts, and besides brought in things for sacrifice that were unfit. The altar was covered with abominable offerings that were forbidden by the laws.[18]

The decrees were ruthlessly enforced and aimed directly at destroying the religious practice of the Jews:

> People could neither keep the Sabbath, nor observe the festivals of their ancestors, nor so much as confess themselves to be Jews. On the monthly celebration of the king's birthday the Jews were taken, under bitter constraint, to partake of the sacrifices and when a festival of Dionysus was celebrated, they were compelled to wear wreaths of ivy and to walk in the procession in honor of Dionysus.[19]

More extreme versions of these lavish celebrations, called *orgia* in Latin, had been banned in Rome two decades earlier. The text of Maccabeans gives one tragic example of the persecution—two women brought in for having circumcised their children were publicly paraded around the city with their babies hanging at their breasts, and then hurled down headlong from the walls to their deaths.

Such extreme and punitive action against Judaism inevitably caused an equally extreme and violent reaction—the revolt of the Maccabeans.

The Maccabeans

Mattathias, a priest who had removed himself from the priestly elite of Jerusalem, led the revolt. He had been forced to flee from his home into the mountains after slaying a fellow Jew in the act of making sacrifice to a Greek god, then killing the Gentile officer who witnessed the killing:

> a Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice upon the altar… according to the king's command. When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal and his heart was stirred. He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and killed him upon the altar. At the same time he killed the king's officer who was forcing them to sacrifice, and he tore down the altar.… Then Mattathias cried out in the city with a loud voice, saying: "Let everyone who is zealous for the law and supports the covenant come out with me!" And he and his sons fled to the hills and left all that they had in the city.[20]

Mattathias died in 166 BCE, and leadership fell to his son Judas, later known as Maccabee "the hammerer" for the force with which he pressed the revolt against Antiochus. By 164 BCE, Judas Maccabeus had gained control of most of Jerusalem including the Temple. Immediately, he repealed the decrees of Antiochus; Jews were again allowed to practice their religion. Then he restored the Temple:

> Then Judas and his brothers said, "See, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it." So all the army assembled and they went up to Mount Zion. And they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins.[21]

It is surprising that such desolation and neglect could have been created in less than two years. For the Maccabeans, their most urgent task was to cleanse and restore the sanctuary:

> Judas…chose blameless priests devoted to the law, and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place. They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned. And they thought it best to tear it down, lest it bring reproach upon them, for the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there

> should come a prophet to tell what to do with them. Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one. They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts. They made new holy vessels, and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. Then they burned incense on the altar and lighted the lamps on the lampstand, and these gave light in the temple. They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains…Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.
>
> …early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, the month of *Chislev*, in the one hundred and forty-eighth year, the renewal of the Temple was celebrated…At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it.[22]

All those who had come together to cleanse and rebuilt offered sacrifice. The morning was filled with song and the sounds of harps and lutes and cymbals.

> All the people fell on their faces and worshiped and blessed Heaven, who had prospered them….
>
> Then Judas and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel determined that every year at that season the days of dedication of the altar should be celebrated with gladness and joy for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of *Chislev*.[23]

And henceforth, this celebration has been known as *Hanukkah*, Hebrew for "dedication." In 143 or 142 BCE Simon Maccabeus, brother of Judas and first of what came to be known as the Hasmonean dynasty, inherited the leadership of the revolution. In 135 BCE this role passed to his son John known as Hyrcanus I,[24] who ruled from around 135 to 104 BCE. Through conquest he brought power and wealth to Judea. He allied with Rome and took possession of the neighboring Arab lands of Samaria and Idumaea;[25] forcing the Idumaea to convert to Judaism, the only example of conversion imposed by the Jews on another people in their history. After the rule of John, the dynasty[26] went into decline.

Though Hellenism would continue to be a fertile and disturbing influence on Jewish life for the next century, the Maccabean revolt ended the

possibility, sought by many Jews, of blending Hellenism with the teachings of Judaism.

Pompey

It was the perceived weakening of the Maccabean rule that encouraged the Romans, in 63 BCE, to invade Judea and take Jerusalem with forces under the command of the Roman General Pompey.[27] As triumvir, Pompey was one of the three men ruling the Roman republic, and this annexation was but a minor play in his campaign to bring the eastern provinces and frontier kingdoms firmly within Roman control.[28]

Roman historian Josephus in *Antiquities* claimed that Pompey took advantage of the Jewish obligation to rest on the Sabbath in planning his attack. Although Jewish law allows people to defend themselves if attacked on the Sabbath "yet does it not permit us to meddle with our enemies while they do anything else." And the Roman troops, working day and night, were building a vast earthern ramp against the walls. Up this were rolled the great mechanical engines of Roman warfare, battering rams and *ballista* – massive stone-hurling catapults. The following day, Pompey attacked Temple Mount with all his machines. These pounded the walls of the Temple, but even under attack the priests remained at their posts:

> And any one may hence learn how very great piety we exercise towards God, and the observance of his laws, since the priests were not at all hindered from their sacred ministrations by their fear during this siege, but did still twice a-day, in the morning and about the ninth hour, offer their sacrifices on the altar; nor did they omit those sacrifices, if any melancholy accident happened by the stones that were thrown among them.[29]

The walls were destroyed; the Temple, though left standing was battered and broken. And in the aftermath Pompey entered the courtyards and into the Holy of Holies. For the Jews this was an outrageous act of defilement, yet Josephus, writing a hundred years later, was forgiving:

> no small enormities were committed about the temple itself, which, in former ages, had been inaccessible, and seen by none; for Pompey went

> into it, and not a few of those that were with him also, and saw all that which it was unlawful for any other men to see but only for the high priests. There were in that temple the golden table, the holy candlestick, and the pouring vessels, and a great quantity of spices; and besides these there were among the treasures two thousand talents of sacred money: yet did Pompey touch nothing of all this, on account of his regard to religion; and in this point also he acted in a manner that was worthy of his virtue. The next day he gave order to those that had the charge of the temple to cleanse it, and to bring what offerings the law required to God; and restored the high priesthood.[30]

Following their victory, it was convenient for the Romans to keep the city and the Temple temporarily under the rule of the Maccabean house. The two claimants for the role were brothers of little ability save for being descendants of Judas Maccabee. Pompey appointed one as high priest, without the title of king, the other he marched off to Rome, as a trophy. Rome had discovered an effective leader elsewhere.

Herod

In the years that followed Pompey's invasion a powerful leader emerged in the region; he was named Antipater, chief of the Idumaea, the Semitic Arab tribe that had been brought under the control of Judea by John Maccabeus. The Idumaea had remained with the Jewish faith. The Antipater had given strong support to Pompey's invasion of Judea, and as a reward, Julius Caesar made him a Roman citizen and imperial treasurer of Judea.[31] Then, in 48 BCE, the Antipater named his son Herod as governor of Galilee.[32] Born in 73 BCE, Herod[33] had been groomed by Rome for leadership since his childhood, visiting Rome in his youth and meeting and befriending Mark Antony.

Six years later they made him governor of the fourth part of Galilee, a position he held for barely a year, before fleeing to Rome to escape the invasion by the Persians.[34] While there he renewed his acquaintance with Mark Antony, one of the three rulers of the republic (*triumvir*), and it was Mark Antony who encouraged the Senate to name Herod as King of Judea.

However, to earn this title he was required by Rome to drive the Persians out of his kingdom. Rome provided the army and, in 37 BCE, the 36-year-old Herod recaptured Jerusalem and became King of the Jews.

Herod ruled Judea from 37 to 4 BCE. Both for love and politics, he divorced his first wife and married Marianne, a Maccabean princess,[35] thus preserving the relationship with the revolutionary dynasty. Though raised as a Jew, and honoring the God of Abraham and Moses, he was a passionate admirer of Roman and Greek culture. This was in part because he owed all to Rome: his kingdom; his military skill; his vision and ambition. The Rome he had seen in the few years he spent there, though still destabilized in the aftermath of the assassination of Julius Caesar,[36] had begun to assume grandeur unequalled in the known world. He would have learned much from the purges and skirmishing that went on long after the assassination. Later, he must have watched with active interest the erosion of republicanism and the anointing in 27 BCE of Octavius as Augustus Caesar. Herod had supported the rival claims of his old friend and mentor Mark Antony, the arch-enemy of Octavius, but the new Caesar forgave him and Herod was privileged to witness Augustus[37] emerge as one of history's most brilliant administrators. He would have seen his fundamental restructuring of all aspects of Roman life, giving it a productive new order based on trade and communication that would last for four centuries. He would have played his part in the establishment of *Pax Romana*, in which the empire protected and governed individual provinces such as Judea, permitting each to make and administer its own laws while accepting Roman taxation and military control.[38]

Though Augustus left many permanent monuments in his wake, above all the Forum of Augustus in Rome, which still bears the outline of the Temple to Mars the Avenger, a permanent mark of his will to avenge the death of Julius Caesar, his legacy was not as a builder but as the architect of an empire. Herod, in contrast, actively created built structures to advance his vision for Judea. Much of what he built emulated the work of Roman architects—the faithfully followed supreme stylists who reproduced the form and idea of Rome in towns large and small throughout the empire, creating the essential and popular instruments of imperial control, diverting the masses and enhancing the prestige of the powerful. Yet, in addition, Herod conceived and constructed works of startling originality. Enough fragments

survive to show that his architecture responded to programs and performances of his own imagining, which owed little to Rome. The creation of *Caesarea Palaestinae*, or *Caesarea Maritima*,—a new port city that quickly became a center of trade in the eastern Mediterranean—was the product of visionary regional planning, and the conception of the *Herodion*, the fortified palace south of Jerusalem, (which he also conceived as his mausoleum), remains, even in ruins, a strange and powerful thing. It is formed from a vast cylinder flanked by defensive towers all rising out of an artificial cone of earth in the near-desert landscape. Forbidding on the outside, inside it was a setting of luxurious indulgence, a labyrinth of baths and grand halls in which allies could be entertained and from which war could be waged. It was like nowhere else.

Strangest and most extravagant, was the suspended palace built—with much difficulty and ingenuity—into the rock face of Masada,[39] the isolated mesa 150 feet above the southwest coast of the Dead Sea. Terraces survive from three distinctly different pavilions, ascending one above the other on the southern prow of the mesa. Here, Herod would have bathed in a pool surrounded by objects of the most refined elegance, suspended high above the bleak and barren desert. Such extremes must have given him intense pleasure; they also give us a glimpse of his nature and his ambition.

Before restoring the Temple, Herod set out to rebuild Jerusalem. The slopes immediately to the west of Temple Mount had been transfigured into a markedly Roman town. He laid out new streets between the old city of David, to the south, and the upper city. There, he built an amphitheater, and, close by, a theater, both to provide stages on which he could produce extravagant spectacles in tribute to Augustus Caesar. With little effort Herod's Jerusalem can be resurrected in the imagination: the buildings would all have been made from the white stone of the city, placed within a grid of broad streets defined by the walls of elegant villas. Also within the grid were a few public squares which held the grand instruments of public entrainment and indulgence: the circus, the theater, the baths,—Greek drama, wrestling, naked men running, gladiators dying, horses with chariots. Jerusalem became a riot of activity on the feast days of the gods and around the spectacle of the games.

Josephus Flavius[40] described these performances in both his *History of the*

Jewish War (written between 75 and 79 CE), and *The Antiquities of the Jews* (93 CE). He is unsparingly critical, Herod's actions had violated the laws of Judaism and led to a neglect of religion and corrupted the nation. Josephus writes of the games "for we have had no such shows delivered down to us as fit to be used or exhibited by us.…for there were very great rewards for victory proposed, not only to those that performed their exercises naked."[41] Nothing in Jewish history could allow such nudity.

And in the amphitheater Herod:

> made a great preparation of wild beasts, and of lions themselves in great abundance, and of such other beasts as were either of uncommon strength, or of such a sort as were rarely seen. These were prepared either to fight with one another, or that men who were condemned to death were to fight with them. And truly foreigners were greatly surprised and delighted at the vastness of the expenses here exhibited and at the great dangers that were here seen; but to natural *Jews*, this was no better than a dissolution of those customs for which they had so great a veneration.[42]

The phrase "natural Jew" was a reminder that Herod was not.

It was disingenuous to suggest that such entertainments only appealed to foreigners: "It appeared also no better than an instance of barefaced impiety, to throw men to wild beasts, for the affording delight to the spectators; and it appeared an instance of no less impiety, to change their own laws for such foreign exercises."[43] The meaning of this is not entirely clear, but it seems to suggest that the religious laws of Judea had been amended to allow such spectacle. Josephus continues "…But, above all the rest, the trophies gave most distaste to the *Jews*; for as they imagined them to be images, included within the armor that hung round about them, they were sorely displeased at them, because it was not the custom of their country to pay honors to such images."[44] This last concern equates the veneration of the trophies with the worship of idols. This new amphitheater and its brutal rituals and entertainments were undermining religious practice and rivaling, if not diminishing, the authority of the Temple.

Herod had re-created Jerusalem as a splendid Greco-Roman town, while above it on the ridge of Mount Moriah, seen by all every day, lay the faded and bruised remains of a once-mighty Temple; its walls still scarred from the

Roman attacks of fifty years earlier. The Temple had to be rebuilt, its presence enlarged to match Herod's vision for himself and for a new Jerusalem.

Herod Demolishes the Second Temple

In 19 BCE, the eighteenth year of his reign, with his nation strong and secure in the trust of patronage and friendship of Augustus Caesar, Herod made a public commitment to rebuild the Temple of Solomon. This act, in the words of Josephus, would be "sufficient for an everlasting memorial of him;… [Herod would] build of himself the temple of God, and make it larger in compass, and to raise it to a most magnificent altitude, as esteeming it to be the most glorious of all his actions, as it really was, to bring it to perfection."[45]

Though this decision may have been an act of faith, it was also a political act, addressing the concerns of the priests who saw in all the promotion of Roman and Greek realities and spectacles a diminishment of Judaic culture. However, his decision to rebuild may have simply been a necessity, given the condition of the structure. Nonetheless, any interference with this most sacred of places would inevitably cause extreme anxiety. To rebuild, Herod had to destroy the only Temple the people had ever known.

Within Judaism there could only be this one Temple, this one place to sacrifice, to find atonement, to reconcile with God. Josephus explains why: "There ought…to be but one temple for one God; for likeness is the constant foundation of agreement."This phrase "likeness the constant foundation of agreement" is of compelling ambiguity. It suggests that one God necessitated one Temple; this Temple was the only physical link to God. He continues "This temple ought to be common to all men, because he is the common God of all men."[46] This comes from Exodus; all the men are the men of Israel. The difficulty that Herod faced in proposing to rebuild was the belief that any harm to the Temple threatened the existence of the religion, would harm the very body of God.

This public commitment survives in a speech given to an assembly of the leaders of the community and the priests of the Temple to gain their support. This text was available to Josephus a century later. Herod's words:

> I imagine that, with God's assistance I have advanced the nation of the *Jews* to a degree of happiness which they never had before; and for the particular edifices [works of architecture] belonging to your own country, and your own cities, as also to those cities that we have lately acquired, which we have erected and greatly adorned, and thereby augmented the dignity of your nation, it seems to me a needless task to enumerate them to you, since you well know them yourselves; [he assumes that all would know he was a great builder] but as to that undertaking which I have a mind to set about at present, and which will be a work of the greatest piety and excellence that can possibly be undertaken by us, I will now declare it to you. Our fathers, indeed, when they were returned from *Babylon*, built this temple to God Almighty, yet does it want sixty cubits [90 feet] of its largeness in altitude; for so much did that first temple which Solomon built exceed this temple.[47]

All would have been known that Solomon's Temple was greatly diminished in the rebuilding after the destruction by the Babylonians, reduced by half its former size.

> Nor let any one condemn our fathers for their negligence or want of piety herein, for it was not their fault that the temple was no higher; for they were *Cyrus*, and *Darius* the son of *Hystaspes*, who determined the measures for its rebuilding; and it hath been by reason of the subjection of those fathers of ours to them and to their posterity, and after them to the *Macedonians*, that they had not the opportunity to follow the original model of this pious edifice, nor could raise it to its ancient altitude.[48]

Though diminished, this ancient structure, by then more than 400 years old, would have carried the aura and virtue of having been formed in the face of extreme suffering, of being rebuilt in an abandoned city; only faith and its presence keeping the memory of Jerusalem alive. Which was truer to the God of Abraham and Moses? This modest unassuming shelter bearing the marks of continual struggle, or the ancient memory of the vast and perfect monument created by Solomon, concerned as much with the power of an

ancient king as with the presence of God?

Once again, another most powerful king would recreate the Temple of Solomon. Herod's words:

> But since I am now, by God's will, your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the principal filing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the *Romans*, [crucial] who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world [here is another glimpse of Herod's character], I will do my endeavor to correct that imperfection, which hath arisen from the necessity of our affairs, and the slavery we have been under formerly, and to make a thankful return, after the most pious manner, to God, for what blessings I have received from him, by giving me this kingdom, and that by rendering his temple as complete as I am able.[49]

Josephus remembered the reaction:

> And this was the speech which Herod made to them; but still this speech affrighted many of the people…for they were afraid that he would pull down the whole edifice, and not be able to bring his intentions to perfection for its rebuilding; and this danger appeared to them to be very great, and the vastness of the undertaking to be such as could hardly be accomplished.[50]

The trust that he was asking of priests was total. What unknown forces would be released in the act of demolishing the temple? And might not this Greek-loving king choose not to rebuild? Josephus then recalled that Herod:

> encouraged them, and told them he would not pull down their temple till all things were gotten ready for building it up entirely again as he promised them this beforehand, so he did not break his word with them, but got ready a thousand wagons, that were to bring stones for the building, and chose out *ten thousand* of the most skillful workmen.[51]

The rebuilding would be entrusted to priests, specially trained, so he:

> bought a thousand sacerdotal garments for as many of the priests, and had some of them taught the arts of stone-cutters, and others of carpenters, and then began to build; but this not till everything was well prepared for the work.[52]

Josephus continues:

> It is…reported, that during the time that the temple was building, it did not rain in the daytime, but that the showers fell in the nights, so that the work was not hindered. And this our fathers have delivered to us; nor is it incredible, if any one have regard to the manifestations of God. And thus was performed the work of the rebuilding of the temple…the temple itself was built by the priests in a year and six months; upon which all the people were full of joy; and presently they returned thanks, in the first place, to God; and in the next place, for the alacrity the king had showed. They feasted and celebrated this rebuilding of the temple: and for the king, he sacrificed three hundred oxen to God.[53]

The Third Temple

It took eighteen months to rebuild the Temple sanctuary enclosing the Holy of Holies and renewing the great Altar for Burnt Offerings, and extending the Temple platform to the south. Josephus, himself a priest, had officiated in the new Temple. He had vivid memories of the sanctuary:

> Now the outward face of the temple in its front wanted nothing that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes; for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a very fiery splendor, and made those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn their eyes away, just as they would have done at the sun's own rays…[the Temple] appeared to strangers, when they were coming to it at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for as to those parts of it that were not gilt, were exceeding white. [54]

Brilliant but also practical “On its top it had spikes with sharp points, to prevent any pollution of it by birds sitting upon it.” The Temple has to be utterly pure.

The entrance portal was set in a massive gold-covered wall, 150 feet high and wide: “As to the holy house itself, which was placed in the midst [of the inmost court], that most sacred part of the temple…in front its height and its breadth were equal, and each a hundred cubits[150 feet].” Cut into it was a

portal “seventy cubits high, and twenty-five cubits broad,” without doors “for it represented the universal visibility of heaven…that it cannot be excluded from any place.” And through this opening could be seen the gate to the inner Temple, it was “all over covered with gold, as was its whole wall about it.” Spread across this opening was a strange and marvelous work of sculpture “a golden vine, with its branches hanging down from a great height, the largeness and fine workmanship of which was a surprising sight to the spectators, to see what vast materials there were, and with what great skill the workmanship was done,” from which hung clusters of golden grapes, each as tall as a man. These descriptions, all from Book V of *Wars of the Jews,* create an image of the Temple that is sensuous, spectacular and free from any of the symbolism one might have associated with Judaism; this is Josephus at his most poetic.[55]

Beyond the portal, the Temple's inner sanctum was approached through “golden doors of 45 cubits altitude, and 16 in breadth” [68 feet high, by 24 feet wide] and covering the front of the door was a veil of equal size:

> It was a Babylonian curtain, embroidered with blue, and fine linen, and scarlet, and purple, and of a [texture] that was truly wonderful. Nor was this mixture of colors without its mystical interpretation, but was a kind of image of the universe; for by the scarlet there seemed to be enigmatically signified fire, by the fine flax the earth, by the blue the air, and by the purple the sea; two of them having their colors the foundation of this resemblance; but the fine flax and the purple have their own origin for that foundation, the earth producing the one, and the sea the other. This curtain had also embroidered upon it all that was mystical in the heavens, excepting that of the [twelve] signs, representing living creatures. [56]

The signs were the Hellenic *zodiakos kyklos* or “circle of animals,” the signs of the Zodiac that symbolize the path of the Sun across the celestial sphere over the course of the year.

Though there was no image of the God, the representation of his power through symbols of fire, earth, air, and sea, and the heavens, suggests that at this time, the God of the Jews would have been quite at home with the gods of the Greeks, lacking only their representation in human form. The major absence from the description was any mention of the sun.

The sanctuary was 90 feet in length and 30 feet wide, exactly as the first Temple, but twice as high—90 feet. This immense enclosed space was divided into two unequal rooms. The forward part, 60 feet long, had within it (Figures 2.1, 2.2):

Figure 2.1 The Herodian Temple precinct: plan with key to the major spaces (according to E P Sanders). There are many attempts to produce a definitive plan and they all have the same general characteristics, not surprising given the detail in the textual descriptions. (The work of Leen Ritmeyer represents the most recent scholarship, but E. P. Sanders' drawings have directness and clarity.) 1. The Antonia fortress; 2. Retaining wall; 3. “West Wall Street” 4. “Wilson's Arch,” spanning the Tyropoeon Valley; 5. “Robinson's Arch,” which leads to the street below; 6. Shops; 7. Porticoes (stoas); 8. The Royal Portico; 9. The exit gate; 10. The entrance gate; 11. “Solomon's Portico” (pre-Herodian); 12. The Mount of Olives; 13. The Court of the Gentiles; 14. The entrance to the platform, connected by a tunnel to no. 10; 15. The exit from the platform, connected by a tunnel to no. 9; 16. Steps and balustrade prohibiting Gentiles; 17. Inner platform and steps.

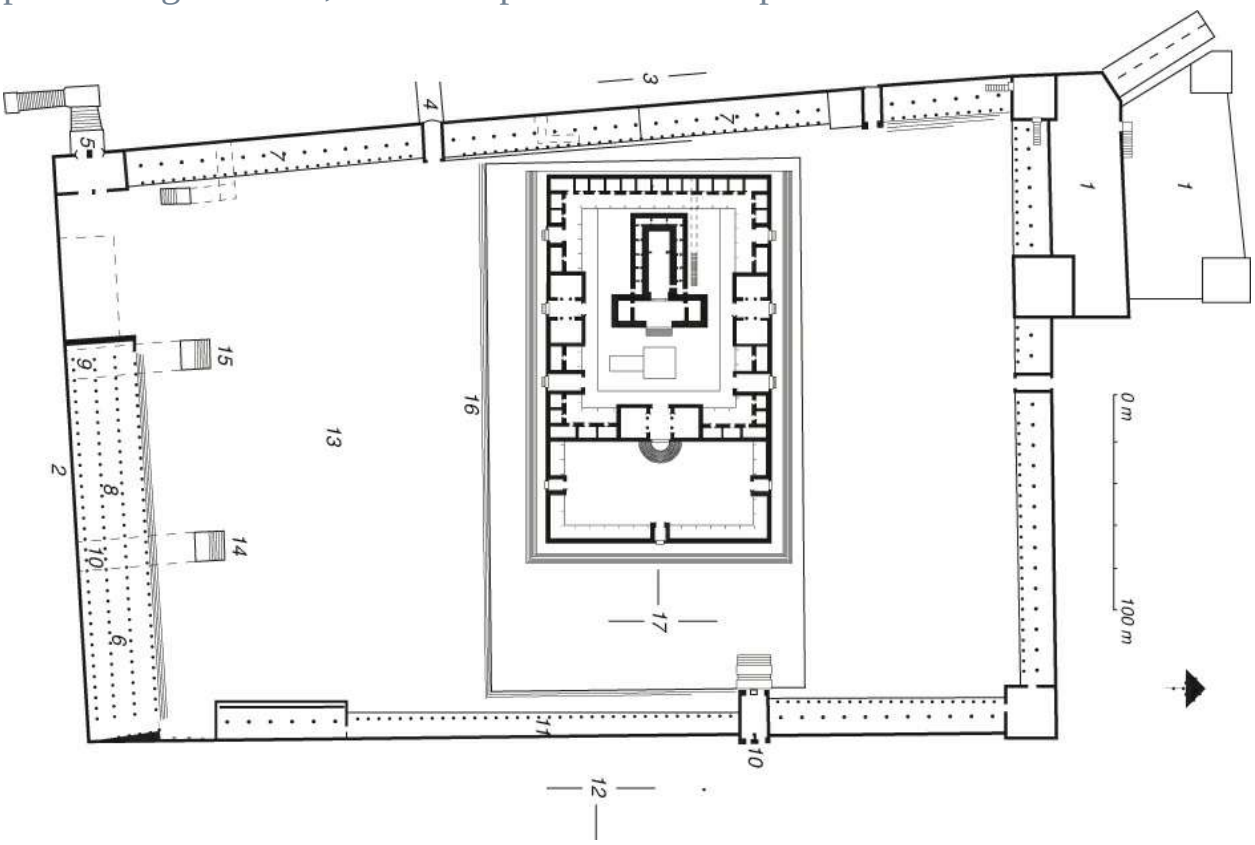
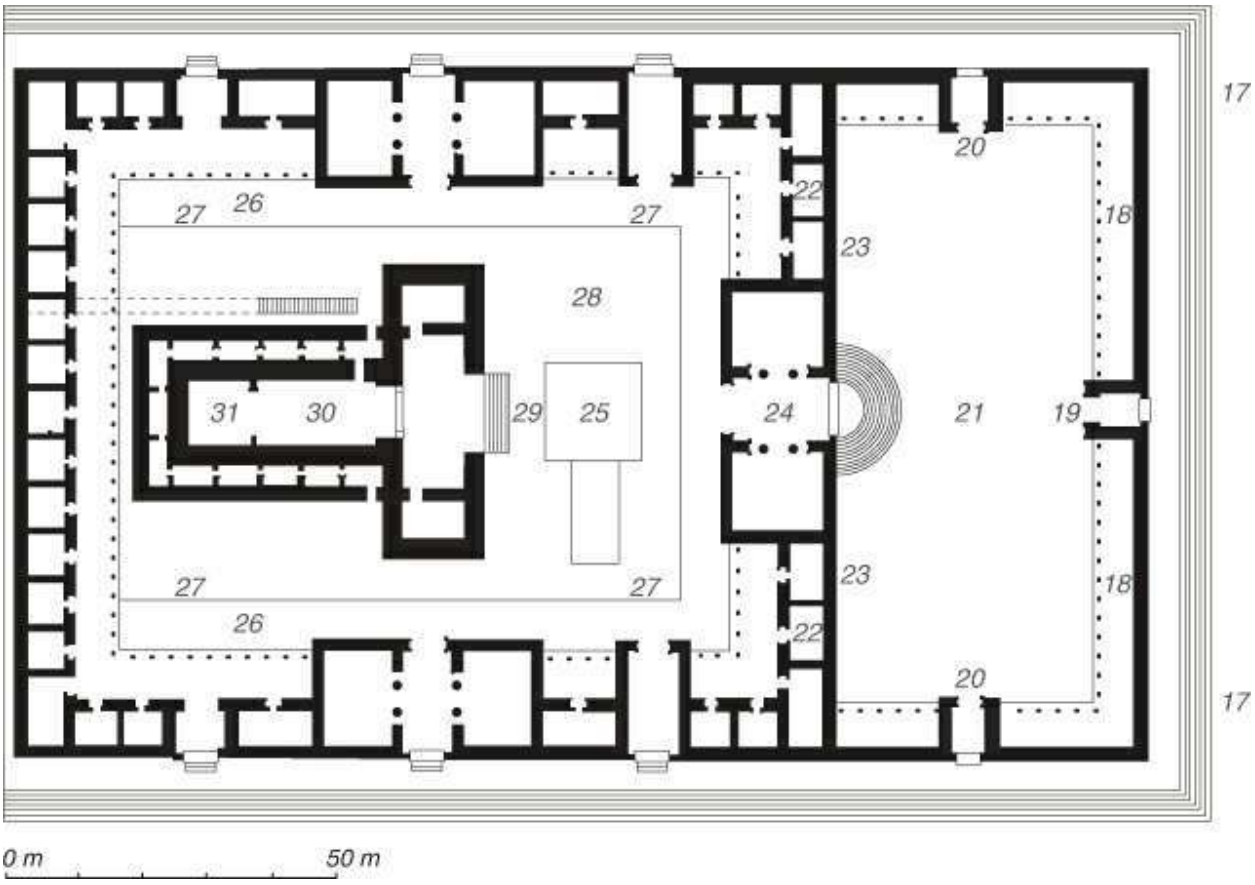


Figure 2.2 The Herodian Temple Sanctuary: Plan with key to the major spaces (according to E P Sanders). 17. Inner platform and steps; 18. Inner wall; 19. First eastern gate, through which male Israelites entered; 20. Southern and northern gates, through which female Israelites entered; 21. Court of the Women; 22. Inner porticoes (stoas); 23. Wall separating Court of the Women from the male area; 24. Second eastern gate, though which male Israelites entered. There may have been a barrier from 19 to 24, preventing men and women from mingling in the Women's Court, and that there may have been a gallery on top of 23, allowing women to see the priests at work; 25. The altar for burnt sacrifices; 26. Court of the (ordinary, male) Israelites; 27. Parapet separating priests form ordinary Israelites; 28. Court of the Priests; 29. The façade and entrance to the Sanctuary; 30. The first chamber (with incense altar and candelabrum); 31. The Holy of Holies.



three things that were very wonderful and famous among all mankind, the candlestick, the table [of shew-bread], and the altar of incense. Now the seven lamps signified the seven planets; for so many there were springing out of the candlestick. Now the twelve loaves that were upon the table

> signified the circle of the zodiac and the year; but the altar of incense, by its thirteen kinds of sweet-smelling spices with which the sea replenished it, signified that God is the possessor of all things that are both in the uninhabitable and habitable parts of the earth, and that they are all to be dedicated to his use.[57]

The reference to the planets and the twelve loaves recalling the months and the zodiac, with the symbolism of the elements embroidered on to the great veil, and the giant grapes, were all evidence that the God of Abraham and Moses was symbolized by the fundamental elements of the natural world: they were together equated with God; the universe, conceived of as a whole, was God. However, there is mystery here. The Pentateuch itself begins with an extended myth that precludes this concept. Here the claim is that all was *creation ex nihilio*, creation out of nothing: God created the earth from no substance. If, within Judaism, a universe co-eternal with its creator is impossible, and there must have been a time when it did not exist, why then represent the elements of the earth and the perceived universe at the entrance to the sanctuary?

Josephus wrote that the inner sanctum, the Holy of Holies was, "separated from the outer part by a veil. In this there was nothing at all. It was inaccessible and inviolable, and not to be seen by any; and was called the Holy of Holies." No attempt made to recreate the Cherubims or the lost Ark of the Covenant. Josephus adds, "Into none of these…did king Herod enter, for he was forbidden, because he was not a priest." [58]

The Temple was fronted on the east by two courtyards; the first was restricted to Jews and into the second only men could go. It was entered:

> on the east quarter, towards the sun-rising, there was one large gate, through which such [Jews] as were pure came in, together with their wives [all men women and children in a pure state, would enter here. However, women:]… when their courses were upon them, were shut out of the temple; nor when they were free from that impurity, were they allowed to go beyond the limit before-mentioned; men also, that were not thoroughly pure, were prohibited to come into the inner [court of the] temple; nay, the priests themselves that were not pure were prohibited to come into it also.[59]

Upon entering, the families would separate; and the husbands would pass through the Court of the Women and up the fifteen steps through the Gate of the Males, the Corinthian Gate[60] into the Court of the Israelite Men before the Altar of sacrifice.

> but the temple further inward in that gate was not allowed to the women; but still more inward was there a third [court of the] temple, where into it was not lawful for any but the priests alone to enter. The temple itself was within this; and before that temple was the altar, upon which we offer our sacrifices and burnt offerings to God and it had corners like horns; and the passage up to it was by an insensible acclivity.[61]

It was a scene of vast slaughter, a shambles of hundreds of beasts—lambs, goats, small birds, doves—being carried to slaughter though a line of priests; Bled and skinned and butchered. The steam and stink and smoke; the blood and fatty tissue carried behind the walls screening the inner court before the temple, carried to the great fire by the Altar, the Altar for Burnt Offerings.[62] This dominated the Court of the Priests, and only a low wall separated it from the Court of the Israelite Men. Those making sacrifice would hand the live beast or bird over the wall to the priests who would butcher it, then climb the steep path to the altar to cast its fatty parts on to the fire. The remains would then be returned to the supplicant to be the food for a family feast that very evening.[63]

The priests had to represent total purity as they sacrificed at the altar:

> those priests that were without any blemish upon them went up to the altar clothed in fine linen. They abstained chiefly from wine, out of this fear, lest otherwise they should transgress some rules of their ministration.[64]

The colorful clothes of the high priest matched the veil to the Sanctuary behind him as he performed the ceremonies:

> [the] girdle that tied the garment to the breast was embroidered with five rows of various colors, of gold, and purple, and scarlet, as also of fine linen and blue, with which colors we told you before the veils of the temple were embroidered also.[65]

And on his head he wore a miter enclosed in a crown engraved with sacred name of God.

Josephus writes that after building the Temple, Herod "took care of the cloisters and the outer enclosures, and these he built in eight years." Eight years seems too little time to complete an architectural and engineering project many times larger than the Temple Sanctuary. The cloisters were 4000 feet in total extent, completely surrounding the Temple precinct. They were supported by a double row of columns:

> and the pillars to them belonging were 25 cubits in height, [almost 40 feet]. These pillars were of one entire stone each of them, and that stone was white marble; and the roofs were adorned with cedar, curiously graven…round about the entire temple…[66]

Surprisingly, the walls of the cloisters "were fixed with the spoils taken from barbarous nations; all these had been dedicated to the temple by Herod." It would seem that Herod did not consider the cloisters sanctified. And attached to the northern end Herod built a fortress, the *Antonia*, named for Mark Antony. It had towers at each of its four corners; the fourth, on the southeast corner, overlooked the Temple precinct and was linked by a passage into the cloisters. Surprisingly, it was in the fortress that the vestments the High Priest used for the sacrifice were stored. Herod's apparent need to have a military presence at the walls of the Temple gives insight into both his strategic mind and the unrest that could and did arise on "high days and holidays." "There was also a secret passage built for the king; it led from Antonia to the inner temple…over which he also erected for himself a tower that he might have the opportunity of a subterraneous ascent to the temple, in order to guard against any sedition which might be made by the people against their kings."[67]

And at the southern end, Herod completed the enclosure of Temple Mount with the construction of a vast portico in the Greek manner, a *Stoa* (Figures 2.3, 2.4, Plate 1).

Figure 2.3 The Herodian Temple precinct: perspective from the southwest. Leen Ritmeyer (© Ritmeyer Archaeological Design, reproduced with permission)

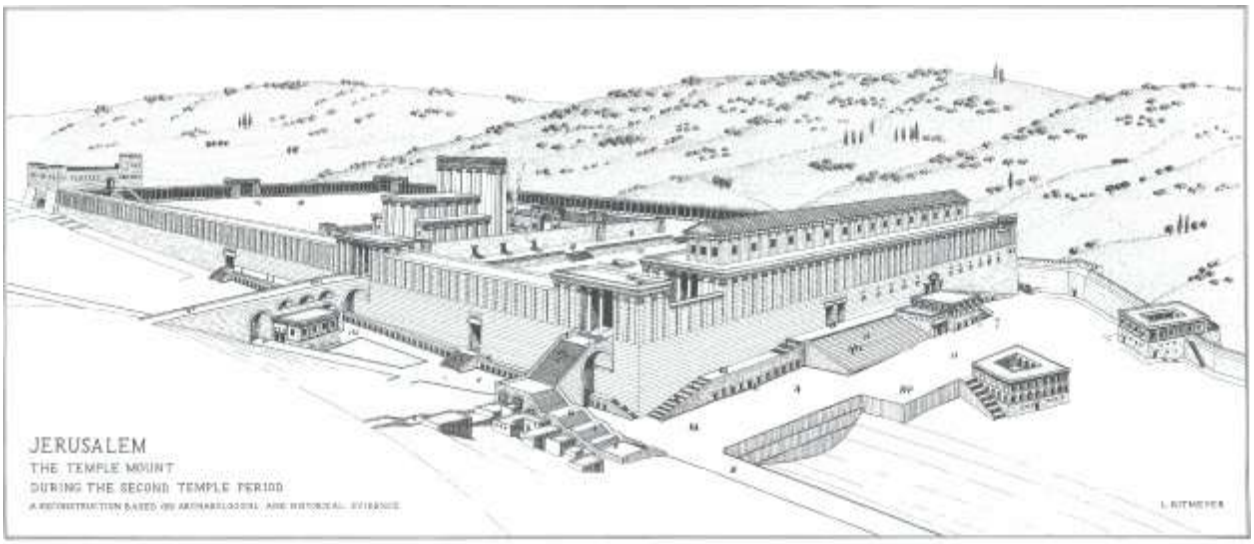
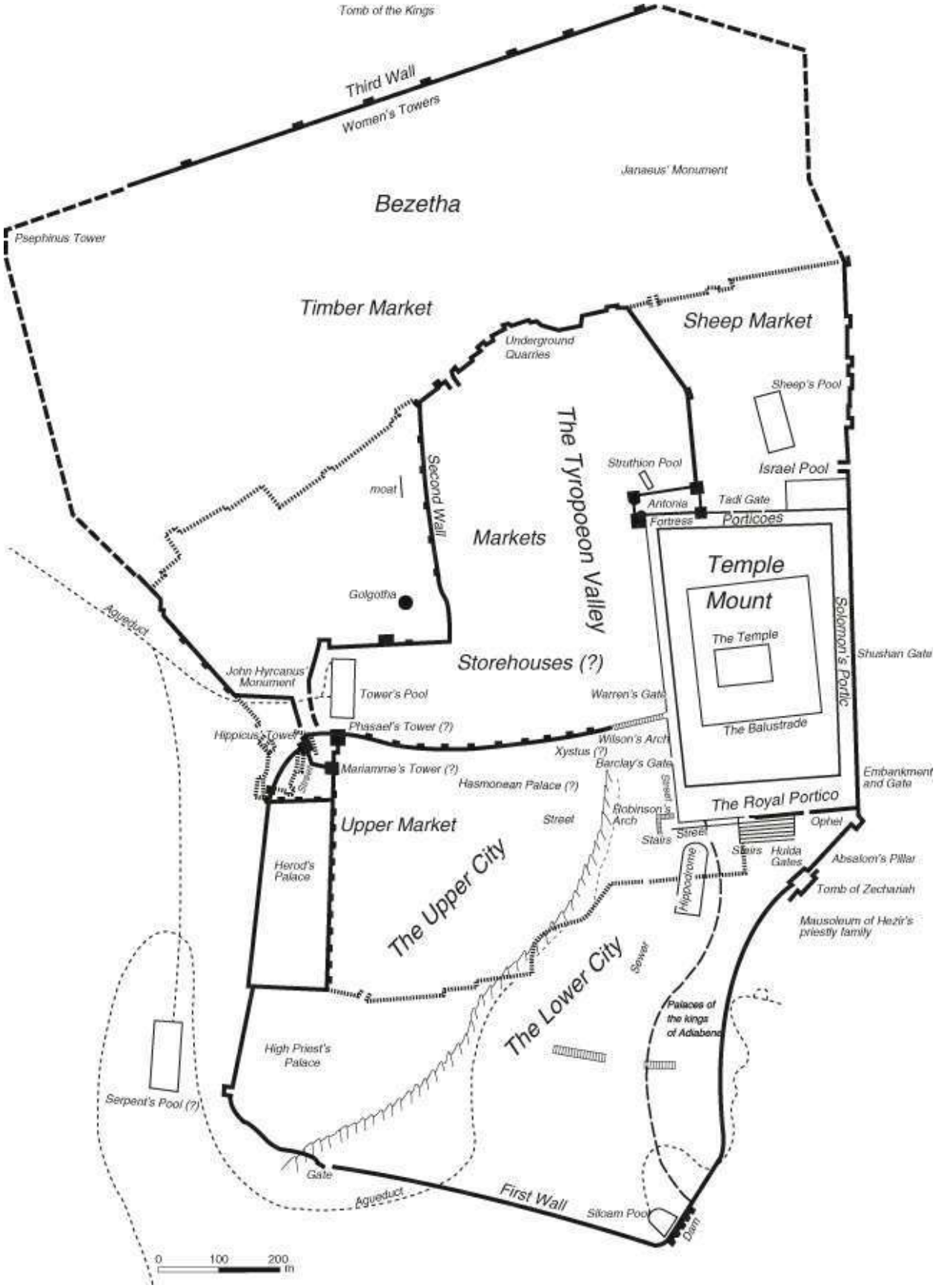


Figure 2.4 Jerusalem in the time of Herod. Maps © Carta Jerusalem, redrawn by permission


Tomb of the Kings
Third Wall
Women's Towers
Janaeus' Monument
Bezetha
Psephinus Tower
Timber Market
Sheep Market
Underground Quarries
Sheep's Pool
The Tyropoeon Valley
Second Wall
moat
Struthion Pool
Israel Pool
Antonia Fortress
Tadi Gate
Porticoes
Markets
Temple Mount
The Temple
The Balustrade
Solomon's Portic
Golgotha
Aqueduct
Storehouses (?)
Shushan Gate
John Hyrcanus' Monument
Tower's Pool
Warren's Gate
Phasael's Tower (?)
Hippicus Tower
Wilson's Arch
Xystus (?)
Barclay's Gate
Mariamme's Tower (?)
Hasmonean Palace (?)
Embankment and Gate
Street
The Royal Portico
Robinson's Arch
Upper Market
Street
Ophel
Stairs
Stairs
Huldа Gates
Absalom's Pillar
Herod's Palace
The Upper City
Hippodrome
Tomb of Zechariah
Mausoleum of Hezir's priestly family
Sewer
The Lower City
Palaces of the kings of Adiabene
High Priest's Palace
Serpent's Pool (?)
Gate
Aqueduct
First Wall
Siloam Pool
Dam
0
100
200
m

The Royal Portico

This is Herod's masterwork: in extending the Temple platform to the south he build a portico–a *Stoa*—a vast colonnade, closed to the outside, but open within the Temple precinct to a new court—the Court of the Gentiles. It was the largest inhabited structure in the Roman world.[68] The Stoa was a uniquely Hellenistic building designed for public gathering. The most celebrated example was in Athens, in which, three centuries before Herod, the philosopher Zeno had introduced his philosophy of emotional discipline—stoicism—named for the Stoa.

Herod's Stoa sat within the crown of the Southern Wall, which faced the major path of pilgrimage to the Temple. It was vast and perfect wall—800 feet long, and soaring 400 feet above the ground level, with the Stoa's golden roof rising a further 50 feet above that. And in a city filled with the extrovert structures of Roman realty, it was silent; Josephus writes, “nor was it on the outside adorned with any work of the painter or engraver.” Its soft white stone would have bathed all below in the reflection of the morning sunlight. It presented a setting for the Temple of unequalled magnificence.

Josephus describes the building of the Southern Wall as “the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man,” Its foundations were laid 450 feet below the platform and Josephus adds, “yet did not the entire depth of the foundations appear, for they brought earth, and filled up the valleys, as being desirous to make them on a level with the narrow streets of the city.” He continues “they made use of stones of forty cubits in magnitude [60 feet in length],”[69] and elsewhere he writes “Of its stones, some of them were forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth.”[70] These dimensions seem improbable, yet stones of such a height and breadth have been uncovered in recent years. And, concealed behind the wall, a grid of columns carried arches which in turn carried the Stoa and the Court of the Gentiles.

Dwarfed at its base were two sets of gates, the Hulda Gates; fragments of both still exist. These controlled the entry to and exit from the temple for the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who journeyed to Jerusalem on the high days and holidays. Pilgrims entered through the gate on the right, and exited on the left. Those entering would climb a dark and steep stair before

emerging on to the Temple platform at the center of the Court of the Gentiles. As they emerged from the darkness they would face the walls of the inner sanctum, with the mass of the Holy of Holies rising above it. They would see:

> a partition made of stone all round, whose height was three cubits [5 feet]: its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars, at equal distances from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that "no foreigner should go within that sanctuary" for that second [court of the] temple was called "the Sanctuary."[71]

"Under pain of death" it read [72] (Plate 2).

Those who chose to turn around and look south would have been astounded to see a great open-columned hall almost 700 feet in length. A structure that not only sat opposite to, but seemed to be physically in opposition to the Sanctuary. Ahead was a forbidden place threatening death to the foreigner who dared enter: behind, a vast welcoming hall of public assembly. The lower part of the interior was formed from 162 columns in three rows, each 50 feet high; they in turn carried an upper colonnade which supported the wooden roof "adorned with deep sculptures, one hundred feet above the stone floor. The thickness of each pillar was such, that three men might, with their arms extended, fathom it round, and join their hands again…Their (capitals) were made…after the Corinthian order, and caused an amazement by reason of the grandeur of the whole."[73] It is still possible to walk most of the length of the area it covered and the several of these capitals still lie at the base of where the columns once stood.

In extending the platform Herod had created public forum for the Jews and Gentiles against the very walls of the Temple sanctuary: the Court of the Gentiles—explicitly the court of Hellenes–Greeks. There was no attempt to conceal the obvious; this monumental structure was wholly Greek in form and performance. As with the more modest Stoa of Attalus[74] in Athens, this would not only have been for public promenade and shelter, but also a place of business where moneychangers would set up their tables, where the small birds for sacrifice would be bought; and where there could be informal religious debate and instruction. The eastern end terminated in a grand apse that rose to equal the height of the colonnade, and would have provided a setting for more formal religious activity among the chaos of what was

essentially a marketplace: a marketplace, however, of ideas as well goods.

According to Isaiah, “mine house [i.e. the Temple] shall be called an house of prayer for all people”[75] yet there is no record of the accommodation of Gentiles in the Second Temple before Herod. It may be that its scale was simply an accommodation of the hundreds of thousands who attended the High Holy Days, but beyond this it must be asked, To what grander purpose could such a vast place of assembly have been intended? It would have certainly satisfied, impressed, and perhaps encouraged the ambitions of those who admired the reason and free ways of the Hellenes. Given the bitter division that persisted in Jerusalem between those conservatives holding fast to their faith in the God of Abraham and Moses, and the many Jews who had sympathy for the beliefs and culture of the Greeks, the construction of the Court must have been seen as a political as well as a philosophical act, and would have made many anxious.

Where in Temple ritual would there have been the need for such a massive accommodation of Gentiles? Twenty thousand could easily have gathered within its enclosure. Was the Stoa shaped to actively encourage religious and political discussion? Was it Herod's intent that conservative Jews, philhellenic Jews, and Gentiles might come together beneath these columns to share thoughts on the nature of God and faith? For more than two centuries, Jews had been profoundly touched by Greek philosophy not as something remote but something vital, an evolving presence within Judaic society. Herod's support of Greek culture had renewed the debate on the relation between the beliefs and moral values of the Greeks and the Jews, with both sides trying to gain a deeper understanding of each other's idea of God. Was it to help achieve this that he conceived of such spectacular place?

The Temple precinct was complete when Herod died in 4 BCE, but work continued on the outer walls for decades. In the 70th year of the Common Era all would be destroyed (Figure 2.4.)

Notes

[1] Reigned 223–187 BCE. The Seleucid Kingdom at its most powerful stretched from the Mediterranean to the borders with India. The founder, Seleucus, had been one of Alexander's leading generals.

[2] Third son of Antiochus III.

[3] He was held as a token hostage for his father, as part of Rome's attempts to constrain the Seleucids.

[4] Isaiah 49: 6.

[5] Named for Antiochus III, Antiochus IV had already given Jerusalem the status of *polis*.

[6] Because of the immediacy of the language the extracts from the books of the Maccabees are from the Revised Standard Version of the Protestant Bible (RSV). The books of the Maccabees are not included in the Hebrew Bible: they are, however, canonical in Roman Catholicism and are included in the Protestant Apocrypha.

[7] II Maccabees 4: 7–8.

[8] II Maccabees 4: 9.

[9] II Maccabees 4: 11–12.

[10] II Maccabees 4: 4–15.

[11] The Seleucid kingdom was viewed by the Jews as the “the land of the Greeks.” It imposed the language and customs of Greece across all its territory.

[12] I Maccabees 1: 10–15.

[13] Genesis 17: 9–10, 14.

[14] I Maccabees 1: 21–23.

[15] Many Hellenistic temples were of immense size. The Temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens, begun in 174 BCE: is 135 feet by 354 feet on the stylobate. The oracular temple of Apollo at Didyma is 168 feet by 359 feet on the stylobate. Another colossal temple was built at Cyzicus in the second century CE, with columns of more than 6 feet 6 inches in diameter; it displaced the temple of Artemis at Ephesus as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

[16] I Maccabees 41–44.

[17] Equivalent to the Roman Jupiter, a leader in the pantheon who, from his exalted position on Mount Olympus, was much concerned with all the affairs of men, seeing everything, governing all, rewarding good conduct and punishing evil.

[18] II Macabees 6: 4–5.

[19] II Macabees 6: 6–7.

[20] I Maccabees 2: 23–28.

[21] I Maccabees 4: 36–38.

[22] I Maccabees 4: 41–54.

[23] I Maccabees 4: 55–59.

[24] Born c. 175 BCE, died 104 BCE.

[25] Whose tribal lands were to the southeast of the Dead Sea.

[26] Also known as the Hasmonean dynasty: the last Hasmonean, Antigonus, was deposed and executed by the Romans under Mark Antony. Despite the dynasty's radical origins the Hasmoneans were as absolutist in their rule as any of the Hellene monarchs. From 103 to 76 BCE Alexander Jannaeus imposed his rule by force of war over an increasingly large area, including both the cities of the coast and the area east of the Jordan River. He was the enemy of the Pharisees, the most active defenders of Judaism. His coins bear his title, simply “King Alexander” in Greek as well as Hebrew legends. However, when he died, his widow, Salome Alexandra, assumed political power. Her son Hyrcanus II became the High Priest and she sought the guidance of the Pharisees.

[27] Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (106–48 BCE): statesmen, military strategist, and a triumvir of Rome from 61 to 54 BCE.

[28] He extended the Roman chain of protectorates to include Colchis, on the Black Sea, and the states south of the Caucasus. In Anatolia, he created the new provinces of Bithynia-Pontus and Cilicia.

[29] *Antiquities* XIV 4:3.

[30] *Antiquities* XIV 4:4.

[31] 47 BCE.

[32] The Antipater was assassinated in 43 BCE.

[33] He was born to the south of Judea, his father, the Antipater, had married the daughter of a noble family from Petra then capital of the rising Nabataean kingdom.

[34] The Parthians, an ancient empire to the northeast.

[35] Niece of the last politically active descendant of the Maccabees,

Aristobulus.

[36] 44 BCE.

[37] Herod was not close to Augustus, but his minister Marcus Vispanius Agrippa, became a friend and advisor. Agrippa accompanied Augustus on a state visit to Herod in Judea.

[38] It was the *Pax Romana* that ensured the survival and eventual transmission of the classical heritage, Greek and Roman alike, and provided the means for the diffusion of Judaism and Christianity.

[39] Known now not for Herod's pleasure pavilions, but for a tragic event later in its history.

[40] Josephus was born Joseph Ben Matthias, a Jewish priest, and, significantly, a Pharisee, more concerned the preservation of the Judaism than with nationalism. Exceptionally, he was both a Jewish general and a friend of Rome, as well as eyewitness to the final days of the Temple, but more of this later. His works are described more fully in note 12 of Chapter I.

[41] *Antiquities* XV: 8, 1.

[42] *Antiquities* XV: 8, 1.

[43] *Antiquities* XV: 8, 1.

[44] *Antiquities* XV: 8, 1.

[45] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 1.

[46] Josephus *Against Apion* II, 193 (see note 12 of Chapter I).

[47] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 1.

[48] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 1.

[49] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 2.

[50] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 2.

[51] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 2.

[52] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 2.

[53] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 6–7. It continues “as did the rest every one according to his ability; the number of which sacrifices is not possible to set down, for it cannot be that we should truly relate it; for at the same time with this celebration for the work about the Temple fell also the day of the king's inauguration, which he kept of an old custom as a festival, and it now

coincided with the other, which coincidence of them both made the festival most illustrious."

[54] Josephus, *The Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 6. (see note 12 of Chapter I).

[55] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 4.

[56] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 4.

[57] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 5.

[58] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 5.

[59] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 2.

[60] The Corinthian Gate, "was much larger for its height was fifty cubits; and its doors were forty cubits; (75 feet by 60 feet) and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other."

[61] Josephus wrote that "It was formed without any iron tool, nor did any such iron tool so much as touch it at any time." (It is inconceivable that quarrying and stone-cutting of such a quality could have been managed without the use of metal tools; the alternative would have been stone tools.)

[62] The Altar was 22 feet high and 75 feet square.

[63] In earlier periods the Temple offerings may have been totally burnt, signifying a complete act of faith in the loss of earthly advantage of the animal, but from the textual evidence in the years of Christ's ministry this was not the case—a reflection of the decline in the power of sacrifice.

[64] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 7.

[65] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 7.

[66] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 2.

[67] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 7.

[68] There were larger enclosures—the hypostyle hall of the Temple of Amun in Karnak—but no single structure came close to equaling the scale of the whole and in particular the southern elevation.

[69] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 1.

[70] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 6.

[71] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 2.

[72] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 5.

[73] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 5.

[74] A quarter of the size of the Stoa of Herod.

[75] Isaiah 56: 7.

Chapter 3

“Not…one stone upon another”

And some 37 years after the death of Herod, Christ came with his disciples to Jerusalem to prepare for Passover. Nowhere in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John is there even a glimpse of the epic scale of the Passover festivities, or of the hundreds of thousands who had come to the Temple to make sacrifice. They came to commemorate the time when God preserved or “passed over” the first-born of the Israelites as they prepared for the Exodus, while He “smote” all others in the land of Egypt. The numbers attending in the year of Christ's crucifixion cannot be known, but there is evidence from a few years later. Josephus describes two Passovers in his *Wars of the Jews*. He records that the chief priest of Syria[1] had an estimate made of the number of lambs sacrificed to impress Emperor Nero with the importance of Passover: the number reported to Rome was 255,600. Josephus estimated that if several families shared each lamb, perhaps a total of ten people, the number present in that year in the middle of the first century would have been over two and half million. Improbable perhaps, yet Josephus was an active priest in the Temple in 65 CE, when the gathering by his estimate passed three million. He writes that it took 5000 priests for each stage of sacrifice, and he was one among them, and such were the demands that even priests in less than perfect physical condition would be called into service.[2]

There was the danger with such enormous gatherings of the crowds getting out of control, and within the Temple the cloisters would have been lined with Roman guards, “in order to watch the people, that they might not there attempt to make any innovations.”[3] The Temple and the surrounding streets were always under observation by the Roman military: “for the temple was a fortress that guarded the city, as was the tower of Antonia a guard to the temple; and in that tower were the guards of those three”[4] ready to put down any sign of unrest, of “innovations,” and Passover was a particularly restless

time.

The gospels all give similar accounts of Christ's journey to Jerusalem. In Matthew:

> a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed [spread] them in the way and the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.”[5]

As the procession moved forward the disciples led the crowds in chanting “Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Such a claim troubled the Pharisees in the crowd and they called on Christ to “rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.”[6] Only in Luke is there a record of a more prophetic reaction as they near the city. He imagines a city totally destroyed, its people slaughtered:

> And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying…For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another.”[7]

Exactly Christ's prophesy on leaving the Temple later.

The Mount of Olives still rises steeply to the east of the Temple Mount; it was and remains clearly outside the walls of the city (Plate 3). From it the path that Christ followed descended down to the deep ravine, the Valley of Kidron, then south by the Eastern wall of the Temple. Those who covered his path with their garments would have done so in the midst of thousands descending from camps across the hillside. It was a path, then as now, through an ancient burial ground little changed to this day. As he approached the city walls Christ would have passed a strange structure above the rising ground, a conical shape, like a hat, which slowly revealed itself as the roof of a massive monument, followed closely by other similar structures, all cut from the solid rock (Plate 4).[8] They were part of an extensive Jewish burial ground constructed in the second and first centuries BCE.[9] They still exist, roughened by 2000 years of neglect and abuse yet remaining none the less

noble and elegantly Greek—tangible evidence of the Hellenized character of Jerusalem.[10]

It would have been a scene of great confusion as family groups of all ages, on foot or donkey, struggled to pass through the narrow gates in the city wall just to the south of Temple Mount, gates that stand no longer. On entering they would have been joined by those walking up from the lower town, all coming together beneath Herod's great Southern Wall. The base of the wall and the streets all around were crowded with the stalls all in the business of serving the need of the pilgrims, offering food and drink and beasts for sacrifice. Some were preparing to enter the Temple, some waiting to be cleansed in the many baths built into the rock ledges below.[11] Those making a first visit to the city must have paused to make sense of what they were seeing. How could this place—most sacred to Judaism—have the appearance of a Roman fortress? And though the golden face of sanctuary had been radiant from the distance, this massive wall gave no indication of what it was guarding (Plate 5).

There is a popular Christian belief that Christ entered the Temple precinct through the so-called “Golden Gate”[12,13] that now stands mute and blocked near the center of the Eastern Wall of Temple Mount. This is far from the Stoa and would have been on axis with the Altar for Burnt Offerings and the Sanctuary. If this had been the main path to the Sanctuary in Christ's time it would have brought thousands on to the narrow inner platform in front of the Temple and caused chaos. Rather, Christ and his disciples would have had no choice but to enter the precinct through the highly regimented passages produced by Herod's reconstruction.

Herod rebuilt the Temple not only to restore it and enhance its presence, but also to effectively control the crowds attending the High Holy Days. The Stoa, and indeed the whole southerly extension of the Temple precinct, was formed among other reasons to cope with the hundreds of thousands who had come to make sacrifice. The archeological evidence shows that he planned two distinct southern entries on to the Temple platform. First were the aforementioned Hulda Gates in the center of the Southern Wall; the second was a flight of stairs that arched up to the forecourt of the Stoa on the southwest corner. A fragment of the arch is visible in the Temple wall: it is named Robinson's Arch after the archeologist who identified it the nineteenth

century. Major excavations 50 years ago uncovered the Herodian street that ran below it and the steps at its base—the steps to the Stoa. Deep indents and splits in the flagstones lining the street offer graphic evidence of the force of tons of stone falling on to the pavement in the destruction by the Romans in 70 CE, but more of this later.

Again considered from the point of view of control, such crowds would be divided between those who came carrying their sacrificial offering and those who came empty-handed. Applying this distinction, those carrying an offering would have entered through the Hulda Gates in the Southern Wall into the tunnel under the Stoa and arrive in the Court of the Gentiles, and forward into the hands of the priests and their assistants to be conducted to the inner courts. Gentiles and those Jews who were empty-handed would have entered by the grand stair on the southwest and across Robinson's Arch directly into the Stoa and into the hubbub within the vast portico of the Stoa. There Jews could change their monies and also buy small animals for sacrifice.

The gospels make no mention of Christ making sacrifice,[14] thus it was by this grand stair on the southwest corner that Christ and his disciples, empty-handed, would have entered the Temple (Plate 6). They would have arrived into a splendid open forecourt high above the old city. Josephus wrote of his impression standing in this very place: “insomuch that if any one looked down from the top of the battlements, or down both those altitudes, he would be giddy, while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth.”[15,16] And they may have seemed an awkward group of provincials as they entered the Stoa, but they were in good company, whole congregations who had journeyed from distant villages sitting together with their priests reflecting on the meaning of *Pesach*, Passover. Up against the back wall were the stalls of the sellers of birds and beasts and the modest tables of the moneychangers. All was made insignificant beneath the vast canopy of the roof a hundred feet above their heads, a clerestory making it seem to float (Plate 7). Into this vast chamber would come many would-be prophets. And the arguments they provoked could turn violent. Passover had led to riots in the past and the priestly guardians of the Temple were ever-present in force and on alert, and from a distance the Roman soldiers watched.[17]

Moneychangers

In what follows it is important to consider when the four gospels of the New Testament were written. Analysis has determined that all but one, the Gospel of Mark, were written after the Roman destruction of the Temple. It is believed that Mark was composed around this time or just after. The key texts, then, will be drawn from Mark, on which the other three books are based.

Christ entered into the Stoa and was driven to a fury by what he saw, Mark describes the scene:

> And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;
>
> And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.
>
> And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.
>
> And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.
>
> And when even was come, he went out of the city.[18]

And this commotion took place within the Stoa. Took place in this vast hall 800 feet long, filled to capacity—perhaps 5000 and more—with everyone so involved in their own business that Christ's actions would have gone mainly unnoticed, except those in his immediate vicinity (Plate 9). And they returned the next day and Jesus continued to watch in distress the activities with the Stoa; one small moment inspired him:

> And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.
>
> And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.
>
> And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say

> unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:
>
> For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

They left soon after:

> And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!
>
> And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.[19]

And after he predicts the Temple destroyed, Christ prophecies worldwide catastrophe and death: “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”; “Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” And he warns that his followers “shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.” before they again see the Son of Man coming to earth in a cloud with power and great glory.[20] The disciples could be in no doubt about the gravity and divine significance of his ministry.

Does foreseeing such cataclysms seem less surprising than predicting the destruction of Solomon's Temple? He may have been angry with the priests and their denial of his ministry. He may have been repulsed at the blind trust in animal sacrifice. His faith in Judaism did not need the sacrifice of countless numbers of animals to maintain the balance between man and sacred order. The death and resurrection of “The King that cometh in the name of the Lord” would be the ultimate, the final sacrifice. But to destroy the Temple would be to destroy the only place on earth where God had dwelled. If the text of the Gospel of Mark was written soon after the Romans destroyed the Temple, as some have argued, it would have been hard for the author to resist the claim that such a devastating event was foretold by this new religion. However, Christ's anger with the moneychangers seems warranted, and the exchange on the steps seems to report an actual event and could have provoked in him a wish to destroy. Mark is quite specific that the exchange took place as they were leaving the Temple precinct; leaving

through the forecourt of the Stoa, and within this space or on the adjoining stairs, and it would have been the Stoa that dominated the view. Here were the “great buildings” adorned with “goodly stones and gifts.” Consider that it was the Stoa, not Solomon's Temple, that was the subject of Christ's anger and his prediction. The Stoa, that vast stage of Hellenic theater had willfully or by chance encouraged Christ's behavior and that of malcontents and some who would be called false prophets. More than stage or marketplace, the Stoa had become a forceful social instrument, comingling the worldviews of Judaism and Hellenism. It had to be destroyed.

The text of John is believed to have been composed at the end of the first century, later than the other gospels, when there was no doubt that eternal life was the gift of faith. Here, the same events are embellished to enhance their symbolism with an emphasis on incarnation:

> Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them.[21]

In other words, according to John, Christ was not predicting the destruction of the physical Temple, but “the temple of his body:” He was predicting the crucifixion, and his subsequent resurrection, “in three days I will raise it up.”[22,23]

After leaving the Stoa, Christ and the disciples rested beneath the walls of the Temple in the olive groves of Gethsemane. At nightfall a group of armed men approached and Christ was betrayed by Judas. He cried out: “Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not.” Then he added in resignation “the scriptures must be fulfilled.” And was led away to the high priest.[24] Christ, it can be presumed, was taken to the adjoining fortress, the Antonia, where the Romans kept continual watch.

The three earliest gospels tell what happened next. This from Mark: “And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.” Then two witnesses came forward and said,

"We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." The high priest demanded, "Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?" Christ remained silent. The high priest then asked, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus answered "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." In a fury, the high priest "rent his clothes" and asked, "what need any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy."[25]

During Passover, the Roman governor had the authority to release one prisoner chosen by the crowd. Pilate offered Christ: "And they cried out… Crucify him." Pilate called on the crowd to explain what this man had done, "And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him. So Pilate when they had scourged him, delivered Jesus, and they crucified him." "And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS…And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, Save thyself, and come down from the cross."

> And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
>
> …And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.[26]

Outside of the gospels the only mention of these events before 100 CE appears in Josephus' *Antiquities*:

> Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him.[27]

This was written toward the end of the first century after Christ and is presumed to have been embellished by later Christian transcribers, yet the phrase “drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles” is surprising, for only in John, contemporary with Josephus, is there mention of teaching to the Gentiles. Josephus concludes: “And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day.”[28]

Paul

Scholars have formed the view that the synoptic gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke and John—were produced after the writings of Paul of Tarsus a rabbi, Greek-speaking Pharisee, and the formative voice in the New Testament.[29] Paul's teaching and letters—the earliest surviving Christian texts—extended Christianity beyond Judea to the larger Roman world, and became the foundation for Christian life and thought. Before becoming a Christian, Paul had joined in the early persecutions, believing that Christ in being crucified was cursed by God.[30] He was angered by the claim that Christ's death was a sacrifice of vastly greater significance than the thousand years of offerings to God in the Temple. Then, after his dramatic conversion where he saw the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul became the most persuasive voice in arguing that God, in allowing Christ to be crucified, ended the need for sacrifice in the Temple; for through this death, the Temple of God was in the body of everyone. In his First Letter to the Corinthians[31] he wrote:

> Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.[32]

And in the second letter:

> And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.[33]

Paul evolved Christianity as a path of faith for Gentiles in Greek-speaking communities and for Hellenized Jews. The fifth book of the New Testament, Acts of the Apostles,[34] records Paul's visit to Jerusalem with delegates from

these emerging Gentile churches around 58 CE. It was part of his persistent effort to unite the faiths of Jewish and Greek Christians. Paul, "[after] purifying himself with them entered into the temple." Word spread that this renegade priest had taken "Greeks" into the inner courts, ignoring the signs warning that the punishment for Gentiles crossing this line was death:

> the Jews when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place: [against the Jews, Judaism and the Temple] and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

This appears to have been a conscious act of provocation:

> And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain [of the Romans] that all Jerusalem was in an uproar, who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.
>
> Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.[35]

Once it was learned that Paul was a Roman citizen he was given protection yet expelled from the city. He never returned. The year of his death is presumed to have been around 67 CE. Just three years later, in 70 CE a Roman army under the command of Titus systematically and totally destroyed the Temple and every structure that sat on Temple Mount.

The Temple Destroyed

To understand the sequence of events that led to this, one must return to years immediately following the death of Herod in 4 BCE. The Romans divided his kingdom between two of his sons; Judea was given to Herod Archelaus, and Galilee to Herod Antipas. They were not named kings, but titled *ethnarch*

and *tetrarch* respectively, making clear their dependence on Rome. According to Matthew it had been fear of Herod Archelaus that led Joseph and Mary to flee to Nazareth:

> But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee.[36]

His oppressive regime caused increasing public unrest, and the Romans deposed him in 6 CE, Jerusalem and Judea becoming part of an imperial province ruled by a "procurator" appointed by Rome.[37]

When Christ was teaching Herod Antipas governed Galilee, and Judea was under the Procurator Pontius Pilate, who held the position between 26 and 36 CE. Pilate may have pleased the Temple priests by allowing them to execute Christ, but he had caused outrage by the public display of images of the Emperor Tiberius:[38]

> Now Pilate, who was sent as procurator into Judea by Tiberius, sent by night those images of Caesar that are called ensigns into Jerusalem. This excited a very great tumult among the Jews when it was day; for those that were near them were astonished at the sight of them, as indications that their laws were trodden under foot; for those laws do not permit any sort of image to be brought into the city.[39]

Tiberius'[40] death in 37 CE was followed by decades of instability within imperial administrations causing repercussions across the Empire. His successor, the deeply cruel and disturbed Caligula,[41] attempted to have his statue placed in the sanctuary of Solomon's Temple: he believed he was a worthy god for the Jews to worship. From Josephus:

> Caius Caesar [Caligula]…also extended his impiety as far as the Jews. Accordingly, he sent Petronius with an army to Jerusalem, to place his statues in the temple, and commanded him that, in case the Jews would not admit of them, he should slay those that opposed it, and carry all the

> rest of the nation into captivity: but God concerned himself with these his commands.[42]

And God or reason prevailed.

In both *Antiquities* and the *Wars of the Jews* Josephus records persistent violence in Jerusalem during the middle decades of the first century CE. Jews against the Romans, Jews against the Greeks, and Jews against Jews: much of the fighting taking place in and around the cloisters and the Stoa of the Temple. One after another the procurators of Judea proved inept and abusive. There was open though sporadic civil disorder, and with the coming of procurator Gessius Florus, (64–66) the situation became critical. Josephus portrays him as viciously anti-Jewish and as brutal as he was corrupt. Florus allowed his troops in the city of Caesarea to massacre Jews: 3600 died. He then turned his attention to Jerusalem, summoning the priests to receive and pay tribute to his army as they neared the city:

> Now the high priests assembled the multitude in the temple, and desired them to go and meet the Romans, and to salute the cohorts very civilly, before their miserable case should become incurable. At this time it was that every priest, and every servant of God, brought out the holy vessels, and the ornamental garments wherein they used to minister in sacred things. The harpers also, and the singers of hymns, came out with their instruments of music, and fell down before the multitude, and begged of them that they would preserve those holy ornaments to them, and not provoke the Romans to carry off those sacred treasures.[43]

The priests in the Temple begged the people not to provoke the Romans but, unprovoked, the Romans attacked:

> striking them with their clubs; and as they fled away, the horsemen trampled them down, so that a great many fell down dead by the strokes of the Romans, and more by their own violence in crushing one another…as they forced their way, in order to get in and seize upon the temple, and the tower Antonia [the fortress].[44]

The resistance on the streets of Jerusalem was fierce and the Romans were blocked before reaching the Temple. The Jews knew that the Romans would attempt to enter the Temple precinct through their fortress, the Antonia; “so they got immediately upon those cloisters of the temple that joined to

Antonia, and cut them down." With the destruction of the cloisters Florus retreated. Imagine the extreme difficulty of tearing down a forty-foot high stone colonnade in the midst of armed conflict. However, the columns once collapsed would have formed an impenetrable barrier between fortress and Temple. The year was 66 CE, and the city was moving toward open rebellion against Rome.

Agrippa II, King of Chalcis in southern Lebanon and great-grandson of Herod,[45] had years earlier been appointed High Priest of the Temple. Though powerless in the city, nonetheless he came to Jerusalem to attempt mediation. He summoned all those with influence, and gave a passionate and carefully crafted address to the people of the city. Josephus reports it in full: it ended with a dire warning:

> Have pity, therefore, if not on your children and wives, yet upon this your metropolis, and its sacred walls; spare the temple, and preserve the holy house, with its holy furniture, for yourselves; for if the Romans get you under their power, they will no longer abstain from them, when their former abstinence shall have been so ungratefully requited.[46]

The Jews replied that their anger was against the procurator, not Rome, but Agrippa made it clear that they had already offended Rome and the Emperor and that their actions were enough to cause war:

> for you have not paid the tribute which is due to Caesar and you have cut off the cloisters [of the temple] from joining to the tower Antonia. You will therefore prevent any occasion of revolt if you will but join these together again, and if you will but pay your tribute…This advice the people hearkened to, and went up into the temple with the king…and began to rebuild the cloisters.[47]

The Romans were demanding clear access to the Temple at all times. Here, in some intangible way, was the heart of the revolt: the Temple stood as a constant symbol and instrument of opposition to Rome. It had to be controlled. Agrippa then asked that they again accept procurator Gessius Florus; the crowd's reaction was violent; stones were thrown, and Agrippa quickly fled the city: revolt ensued.

The Zealots, the Jewish sect which had for more than half a century opposed Rome, instructed the *sicarii*, their assassins, to take the Roman

fortress of Masada. “They took it by treachery, and slew the Romans that were there.”

> At the same time Eleazar, the son of Ananias the high priest, a very bold youth…persuaded those that officiated in the Divine service to receive no gift or sacrifice for any foreigner. And this was the true beginning of our war with the Romans; for they rejected the sacrifice [to] Caesar.[48]

This was the essential cause of war, the refusal of the Jews to pay tribute and sacrifice to the Roman Emperor.

Late in 66 CE, with the capricious Nero ruling the Empire, the Jews prepared for war with Rome. They selected their most able and respected men to lead their forces. Josephus was chosen to lead the defense of the Galilee, thus the *Wars of the Jews* is not only the record of a witness, but also that of an active participant. Jewish forces were rapidly organized and quickly defeated two Syrian legions coming to the aid of Gessius Florus. In 67 CE, the Roman General Vespasian with his son Titus arrived with a force of about 60,000 men and the war was fully engaged. By the end of 67, Galilee had fallen and the Romans moved into Judea.

In 70, a Roman army under Titus,[49] on the orders of his father, Vespasian, now Emperor,[50] laid siege to Jerusalem. The siege was total; no food could enter the city. Gradually, as the weeks passed, the population was driven into extortion, murder, and, eventually, cannibalism. In his narrative, Josephus assumes an increasingly ambiguous role in the conflict. At the onset, he was one of the generals responsible for defending the nation. However, on being slightly wounded, he was saved by the Romans and began to change sides. He was asked by the Roman general to call on the Jewish forces to take the battle away from the city and thereby save the Temple. But his appeal, presumably impassioned, had no effect. This text, however, was written years after the events when he was a favorite within imperial circles in Rome, which undoubtedly colored his recollection.

The Romans moved from siege to the attack; they built the machines and the earthworks by which they would take the city (Plate 8). They made public sport of the executions of those caught leaving the besieged city. And in the hail of stones from the ballista, the battering rams began to break through the walls. At that moment the Zealots seized the Temple,

> and laid their arms upon the holy gates [the gates to the Sanctuary] and over the holy fronts of that court. And because they had plenty of provisions, they were of good courage, for there was a great abundance of what was consecrated to sacred uses, and they scrupled not the making use of them.[51]

As the Romans advanced, the Zealots began to destroy the Temple, slowly, from the inside:

> they set the north-west cloister, which was joined to the tower of Antonia, on fire, and after that brake off about twenty cubits of that cloister, and thereby made a beginning in burning the sanctuary; two days after which, …the Romans set fire to the cloister that joined to the other, when the fire went fifteen cubits farther. The Jews, in like manner, cut off its roof; nor did they entirely leave off what they were about till the tower of Antonia was parted from the temple, even when it was in their power to have stopped the fire; …they lay still while the temple was first set on fire, and deemed this spreading of the fire to be for their own advantage.[52]

These actions created a formidable barrier of huge stones between the Antonia fortress and the Temple. Titus ordered the troops to tunnel into the foundations of the fortress by the Temple wall. He then had battering rams brought against the outer wall close to the Sanctuary: "for before these were brought, the firmest of all the other engines had battered the wall for six days together without ceasing, without making any impression upon it."

The Jews fought back:

> Yet did the Jews at length get possession of these engines, and destroyed those that had gone up the ladders, …when Titus perceived that his endeavors to spare a foreign temple turned to the damage of his soldiers, …he gave order to set the gates on fire. And now the soldiers had already put fire to the gates, and the silver that was over them quickly carried the flames to the wood that was within it, whence it spread itself all on the sudden and caught hold on the cloisters…the Jews seeing this fire all about them. Their spirits sunk together with their bodies, and they were under such astonishment, that not one of them made any haste, either to defend himself or to quench the fire. …This fire prevailed during that day and the next also; for the soldiers were not able to burn all the cloisters

that were round about together at one time, but only by pieces.[53]

The deep beams carrying the continuous roof over the cloisters would have burned furiously, cracking and splintering the great stone columns. While it burned Titus gathered his commanders around him to discuss what do with the Temple. Some felt they could eventually drive out the Zealots, most believed that it would be defended to the last. Titus spoke:

> [A]lthough the Jews should get upon that holy house, and fight us thence, yet ought we not to revenge ourselves on things that are inanimate, instead of the men themselves, and that he was not in any case for burning down so vast a work as that was, because this would be a mischief to the Romans themselves,…[54]

The Roman troops stormed the Temple the next day and forced the Zealots out of the inner court before the Sanctuary. They then entered the outer hall of the Holy of Holies. A soldier snatched some burning wood and, hoisted up by another set fire to the golden window high in the wall of the Temple. As the flames went upward, the defenders were horrified and rushed against the Romans to put out the flames. Titus was resting outside the city when told that the Temple was on fire:

> whereupon he rose up in great haste, and, as he was, ran to the holy house, in order to have a stop put to the fire; Then did Caesar, both by calling to the soldiers that were fighting, with a loud voice, and by giving a signal to them with his right hand, order them to quench the fire But they did not hear what he said.[55]

Then with his commanders, he entered the Sanctuary and into the Holy of Holies and looked and found it to be “not inferior to what we ourselves boasted of and believed about it.” At this point with the buildings burning all around, Titus believed “that the [holy] house itself might yet he saved, he came in haste and endeavored to persuade the soldiers to quench the fire.” They did not respond. Josephus wrote that respect for the General was offset by their hatred of the Jews and their will to plunder. He further claimed that troops blocked the General's path as he ran to “restrain the soldiers, and threw the fire upon the hinges of the gate…the flame burst out from within the holy house itself immediately. And thus was the holy house burnt down, without Caesar's approbation” (Figure 3.1, Plate 10). Josephus' portrayal of the

actions and character of General Titus, in essence excusing him of any blame in the destruction of the Temple, must be set against the simple fact that this work was written in Rome years after the war when Josephus had become a favorite of by then Emperor Titus. Josephus would not be the one to provide the evidence condemning the Emperor for the destruction; best blame it on the Zealots and Jewish intransigence.

Figure 3.1 *The Destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem*, Nicolas Poussin, 1637, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. Poussin would have closely read Josephus on both the chaos and slaughter in the courts and cloisters, as well as his earlier description of the Herod's rebuilding the Temple. The major architectural elements—the great colonnades of the *Stoa* and cloister and the mass of the Sanctuary itself, on the right are surprisingly accurate down to the scale and order of the columns. The Bridgeman Art Library.

Josephus portrays Titus watching in horror as the Romans unleashed a frenzy of destruction:

> The flame was also carried a long way, and made an echo, together with the groans of those that were slain; and because this hill was high and the works at the temple were very great, one would have thought the whole city had been on fire. Nor can one imagine any thing either greater or more terrible than this noise; for there was at once a shout of the Roman legions, who were marching all together, and a sad clamor of the seditious, who were now surrounded with fire and sword.…And now the Romans, judging that it was in vain to spare what was round about the holy house, burnt all those places, as also the remains of the cloisters and the gates, two excepted; the one on the east side, and the other on the south, both which, however, they burnt afterward. [These were presumably the Beautiful Gate and the gate on the southwest corner; the entrance to the Stoa.] They also burnt down the treasury chambers, in which was an immense quantity of money, and an immense number of garments, and other precious goods there deposited; and, to speak all in a few words, there it was that the entire riches of the Jews were heaped up together…
>
> And they destroyed the cloisters around the Court of the Gentiles "whither the women and children, and a great mixed multitude of the people, fled, in number about six thousand.[56]
>
> And the battle was won.
>
> And now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple in and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus imperator with the greatest acclamations of joy…[57]

a celebration in the still-smoldering ruins of the Temple. This was the triumph of the conqueror, the triumph of their divine emperor over the God of the Jews. Yet all was not over. Titus stood on the bridge that led into the Temple from the west. Below him, his troops surrounded a disordered mass of the now defeated Jews. He reviled them for the duplicity in their dealings with Rome. Then reviewed the events of the previous days:

> When I came near your temple, I again departed from the laws of war, and exhorted you to spare your own sanctuary, and to preserve your holy

> house to yourselves. I allowed you a quiet exit out of it, and security for your preservation; nay, if you had a mind, I gave you leave to fight in another place. Yet have you still despised every one of my proposals, and have set fire to your holy house with your own hands. And now, vile wretches, do you desire to treat with me by word of mouth? To what purpose is it that you would save such a holy house as this was, which is now destroyed? What preservation can you now desire after the destruction of your temple? Yet do you stand still at this very time in your armor; nor can you bring yourselves so much as to pretend to be supplicants even in this your utmost extremity. O miserable creatures! what is it you depend on? Are not your people dead? is not your holy house gone? is not your city in my power? and are not your own very lives in my hands? And do you still deem it a part of valor to die? However, I will not imitate your madness. If you throw down your arms, and deliver up your bodies to me, I grant you your lives; and I will act like a mild master of a family; what cannot be healed shall be punished, and the rest I will preserve for my own use.[58]

Yet this huddled and dispirited mass was defiant and made no move to surrender. So Titus ordered all but one be put to death; sparing the life of a priest in return for revealing where the treasures of the Temple had been hidden, a betrayal. A priest came forward:

> and delivered him from the wall of the holy house two candlesticks, like to those that lay in the holy house, with tables, and cisterns, and vials, all made of solid gold, and very heavy. He also delivered to him the veils and the garments, with the precious stones, and a great number of other precious vessels that belonged to their sacred worship. The treasurer of the temple also, whose name was Phineas, was seized on, and showed Titus the coats and girdles of the priests, with a great quantity of purple and scarlet, which were there deposited for the uses of the veil, as also a great deal of cinnamon and cassia, with a large quantity of other sweet spices, which used to be mixed together, and offered as incense to God every day.[59]

All these treasures were carried off to Rome. And though all have subsequently disappeared, the menorah is still visible in stone on the Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum. Josephus writes that “God had, for certain, long

ago doomed [the temple] to the fire; and now that fatal day was come." By chance the Romans attacked on "the tenth day of the month Av." the day on which centuries before it had been destroyed by the king of Babylon. This coincidence of fate had no connection to the prophecies of Christ.

There are other sources on these events, but none as complete and graphic as Josephus. Roman author Tacitus in his *Histories*, written thirty years after the war, began with a strangely prophetic portrait of Jerusalem just before the conflict:

> Prodigies had occurred, which this nation [Judea] prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. There had been seen hosts joining battle in the skies, the fiery gleam of arms, the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance from the clouds. The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry that the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a mighty stir as of departure.[60]

The Jews were viewed as "hating all religious rites" because of the superiority of their singular God. And as they were known to have only one God, what gods were departing? But the message to the Roman audience would be clear, Rome was not guilty of this horrendous destruction, it was divine providence—the gods had abandoned the Jews. The Roman author Tacitus simply offers the facts; Jerusalem was destroyed by "all the inventions, used in ancient warfare, or devised by modern ingenuity for the reduction of cities." He claimed that 600,000 people were trapped in the siege, and Josephus believed that over 100,000 people had died and the survivors driven from the city.

And after the conflict the Roman engineers went back into the ruins and not only systematically eradicated all structures from the Temple platform. "Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple."[61] All the structures pulled down—the thousand and more columns that formed the surrounding cloisters - were toppled over with a combination of ropes and levers; then the walls of the sanctuary were dragged to the edge of the platform and pushed and pulled over the edge into the streets below. Finally, the upper layers of the vast blocks of stone that formed the outer walls of the precinct were dragged

down, block by block. Yet left intact was much of Herod's great supporting wall, which survives to this day (Plates 11, 12, 13, 14). Jerusalem “was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation,” wrote Josephus, “that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.” He adds “This was the end to which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.”[62]

The book of Revelation, also known as the Apocalypse of John, is the work of several unknown authors writing in the years immediately after the destruction in 70 CE. The text is a prophecy of a Christian church's perseverance and endurance—even to death. It has a haunting quality reminiscent of Ezekiel. Despite their fragile belief in a God free from the Temple, these early Christians, mostly Jews, saw their faith severely tested after the destruction. Revelation allows the New Testament to end with a sequence of ecstatic visions, written with a passion sufficient to reassure doubters. God carries the narrator as if in a dream “to a great and high mountain, and [he] shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: And the foundations…of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones[63][One for each of the twelve tribes.]…” Yet for all its glory there was no temple “And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”[64]

The Christians may have had no need for it, but for the Jews in this time God was inseparable from the Temple—the loss was total and profound. The Jews, though driven from the city, were not driven from Palestine and over time it emerged that they could sustain and strengthen their faith without the physical presence of the Temple. And many Jews welcomed the Romans, presence in Palestine; *Pax Romana* brought wealth to all. The only innovation the Jews wished for was to be free from the obligation to venerate the emperor. Eventually, religious practice became fully reconciled, not to the destruction, but to the absence, of the Temple. Yet there would remain deep within the Jewish psyche a belief that one day in Jerusalem the Temple would be rebuilt.

Notes

[1] Ruled from 54 to 68 CE.

[2] "[T]here be four courses of the priests, and every one of them have above five thousand men in them, yet do they officiate on certain days only; and when those days are over, other priests succeed in the performance of their sacrifices…Now all those of the stock of the priests that could not minister by reason of some defect in their bodies, came within the partition, together with those that had no such imperfection, and had their share with them by reason of their stock."

[3] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 6.

[4] *Wars of the Jews* V: 5, 8.

[5] Matthew 21: 8.

[6] Luke 19: 39–40.

[7] Luke 19: 44.

[8] Turonian limestone.

[9] A long tradition has named the first structure the tomb of Absalom. Nothing justifies this, but it is clearly a product of wealth. The tomb within the colonnade is inscribed to the Bene Hezir, a priestly family, and descendants of Aaaron, whose descendants were responsible for administering service in the temple. The adjoining block beneath the pyramid is thought to be the family's memorial, their *nefesh*.

[10] These same monuments appear in several of David Roberts' exquisite drawings of the Holy Land which he prepared in the 1830s. The valley that Roberts described was deeper and rockier and a bridge was needed to carry the path across a stream as it passed by the Tomb of Absalom; a bridge which, in some previous form, Christ would also have crossed.

[11] Standing in their remains today it is impossible to conceive how many thousands could be so cleansed before going up to the sacred ground. It must have been a continuous process.

[12] There is evidence that this gate may have been the main entry to the Temple in the years immediately after Herod rebuilt the Sanctuary; in the years when the Court of the Gentiles and the Stoa were being constructed. (It may indeed have been built over the entrance to the court of the Temple

Herod demolished.) Once the southern platform had been completed there would have been the need to redirect the pilgrims to the new entry beneath the Stoa.

[13] In the gospels only John places Christ near this place; he called it Solomon's Porch: “And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.” The fifth book of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, tells of Peter and John healing a lame man in the name of Christ who “sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple,” But this was after the death of Christ. The surviving east face of the Beautiful Gate is believed to be from the period of Herod. In Jewish and Muslim tradition it was and remains the gate through which the just will return on the Day of Judgment and for Christians where Christ will reenter Jerusalem in the Second Coming. To prevent this it was blocked up by the Islamic authorities in the thirteenth century CE and so it remains—though a stone would hardly be a deterrent to a returning Redeemer.

[14] Nowhere within the narratives of Christ's life does he make a blood sacrifice.

[15] *Antiquities* XV: 11, 5.

[16] Above this forecourt may have been “the pinnacle” where the faithful imagined Christ being tormented by the devil: in Luke: “And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence.”

[17] Luke 19: 45–48.

[18] Mark 12: 15–19.

[19] Mark 12: 1: 43.

[20] Luke 21: 10–27.

[21] John 2: 13–22.

[22] The reference to the Temple taking 46 years to complete must have some basis in fact. Though Josephus speaks of the cloisters taking another eight years after the completion of the sanctuary, the scale of the outer enclosure was such that construction could have continued for decades, and the whole Temple precinct would have seemed newly built when Christ arrived.

[23] This echoes the sentiments in Paul's Letter to the Corinthians (1

Corinthians 6: 19).

[24] Mark 14: 53.

[25] Mark 14: 58–65.

[26] Mark 15: 34–38.

[27] *Antiquities* XVIII: 3, 3.

[28] *Antiquities* XVIII: 3, 3. For Christians this is a most striking passage giving objective proof of the existence of Christ and his passion, hence it has been named the *Testimonium Flavianum*, Flavian's testimony. Struggled over by scholars for centuries, it is generally considered not entirely authentic.

[29] The leader of the early church, Paul was born around 10 CE in Tarsus and died in Rome around 67 CE.

[30] Deuteronomy 21: 23.

[31] I and II Corinthians were originally as many as seven distinct letters. They are distilled form from many events that may not have been coterminous.

[32] I Corinthians 3: 16–17.

[33] I Corinthians 6: 16.

[34] Now believed to have been written by the author of Luke's Gospel.

[35] Acts 21: 28–34.

[36] Matthew 2 1: 19.

[37] Who had at his command a permanent force of 3000 recruited from the nearby non-Jewish cities.

[38] Caesar Augustus.

[39] *Antiquities* II: 9, 2.

[40] Ruled from 14 to 37 CE; from 27 CE remained a recluse on the Island of Capri, engaging in obscene and cruel sport among displays of vast wealth.

[41] 37–41 CE.

[42] *Wars of the Jews* II: 10, 1.

[43] *Wars of the Jews* II: 15: 3, 4.

[44] *Wars of the Jews* II: 15, 5.

[45] And later Tetrarch of lands in southern Syria.

[46] *Wars of the Jews* II: 16, 4, 5. It continues: “I call to witness your sanctuary, and the holy angels of God, and this country common to us all, that I have not kept back any thing that is for your preservation; and if you will follow that advice which you ought to do, you will have that peace which will be common to you and to me; but if you indulge four passions, you will run those hazards which I shall be free from.”

[47] *Wars of the Jews* II: 16, 6 and 17, 1.

[48] *Wars of the Jews* II: 17, 2.

[49] Who became Vespasianus Augustus, the Emperor Flavian, in 79 CE.

[50] Named Emperor Caesar Vespasianus Augustus in 69 CE.

[51] *Wars of the Jews* V: 1, 2.

[52] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 2, 9.

[53] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 4, 1.

[54] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 4, 3.

[55] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 4, 6.

[56] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 5, 1–2.

[57] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 6, 1.

[58] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 6, 2.

[59] *Wars of the Jews* VI: 8, 3.

[60] Tacitus *Histories* V 13 (http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/histories.html). It continues “but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall.”

[61] *Wars of the Jews* VII: 1, 1.

[62] *Wars of the Jews* VII: 1, 1.

[63] “The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst…and the

street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.”
[64] Revelation 21: 9–14.

Chapter 4

The Holy Sepulcher

In the years immediately following the destruction Jews were free to reoccupy the city. One synagogue is recorded as surviving, though there had been seven before the war.[1] Although the Temple was leveled, Temple Mount remained sacred, and on High Holy Days sacrifices were made among the ruins. Many of the Jewish towns around Jerusalem suffered little from the defeat by Rome; indeed some had even opposed the war. In them religious traditions remained intact and confident and new prayers, the *Tefillah*, were composed to sustain the memory of the Temple:

> Be merciful O Lord our God, in thy great mercy toward Israel Thy people and toward Jerusalem Thy city, and toward Sion, the abiding place of Thy glory, and toward Thy Temple and Thy Habitation, and toward the Kingdom of the house of David, Thy righteous anointed one. Blessed are Thou, O Lord God of David, the builder of Jerusalem.[2]

…prayers that sustained the belief that it would be rebuilt.

Hadrian and *Aelia Capitolina*

In 130 CE, during the reign of Emperor Hadrian,[3] Judea again revolted against Rome using the tactics of guerrilla warfare and operating away from Jerusalem. In his book *Romaika*, Dio Cassius, the Emperor's favorite historian, recorded the Roman view of the events. The reason for the war, he wrote, was Jewish anger at Hadrian's intention to raze Jerusalem to the ground and build a new city; to be named *Aelia Capitolina*; Aelia's Capitol (after Hadrian's given name):

> and on the site of the temple of the god (Temple Mount) he raised a new temple to Jupiter.[4] This brought on a war of no slight importance nor of

brief duration, for the Jews deemed it intolerable that foreign races should be settled in their city and foreign religious rites planted there.[5]

Erasing Jerusalem and building a pagan structure in the place of the Temple of Solomon would seem compelling reasons for war, yet Dio Cassius was alone in claiming that this was the cause. Much more incendiary were Hadrian's decrees against Jewish traditions, which banned circumcision and public instruction from the Torah. Rabbinical literature is quite clear in the belief that the cause for war was Hadrian's intention to destroy Judaism in this way.

The *Romaika* portrays how carefully the Jews prepared for the conflict. Their strategy was to avoid open battle in the field, choosing instead to creating extensive networks of tunnels strategically placed: "places of refuge whenever they should be hard pressed, and might meet together unobserved underground; and they pierced these subterranean passages from above at intervals to let in air and light." They were led by one Simeon, hailed by many as the Messiah[6] and given the name *Bar Kokhba*[7]–"Son of the Star," others named him *Bar Koziba*, a pun on the Hebrew word for liar. The Christian bishop and historian, Eusebius,[8] writing an *Ecclesiastical History* two centuries later, played on these names: "The leader of the Jews at this time was a man by the name of *Barcocheba*, who possessed the character of a robber and a murderer, but nevertheless, …he pretended that he was a star that had come down to them out of heaven to bring them light in the midst of their misfortunes."[9]

Within a year of the declaration of war, Jewish forces under Bar Kokhba, captured Aelia/Jerusalem, driving out the Romans' XXII Egyptian Legion. On taking possession he ordered coins struck with the legend "Year 1 of the liberty of Jerusalem."[10] The coin appears to carry the image of a temple and the name of the high priest, Eleazer, suggesting that, in the brief months of occupation, Bar Kokhba laid plans to rebuild the Temple.

Hadrian was slow to react and the rebellion spread. "Jews everywhere were showing signs of disturbance, were gathering together, and giving evidence of great hostility to the Romans." Finally, in 134 he recalled his most able general, Julius Severus, from Britain, to manage the conflict. Severus saw no choice but to match the guerilla tactics of the Jews: "intercepting small groups…depriving them of food and shutting them up, and in time he was

able, to crush, exhaust and exterminate the enemy." The resulting Roman victory was far more destructive to Judea than the war that destroyed the Temple. Cassius reports that 985 villages were razed to the ground, and 580,000 men were "slain in the various raids and battles…the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out. Very few in fact survived." Judea was desolate,[11] and the people were banned from ever returning to Judea–or even seeing it from a distance.

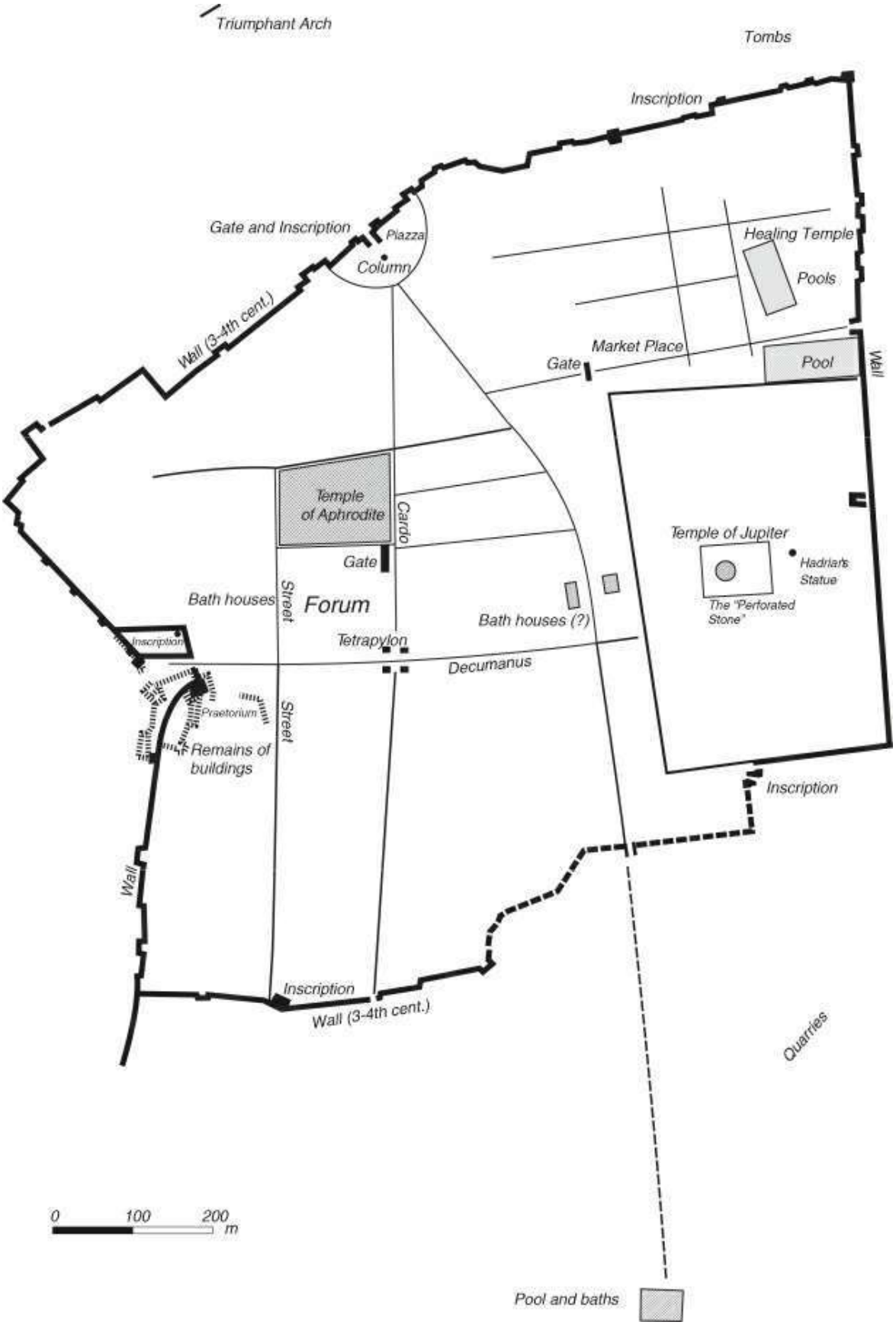
Jerusalem ruined and abandoned was then "colonized by a different race, and the Roman city which subsequently arose changed its name and was called Aelia, in honor of the emperor Aelius."Aelia, once Jerusalem, was a minor city, its name a constant reminder of Rome's crushing of the Jews. In giving it his family name, Hadrian may have been reminding the Jews of their sin of having once refused to pay homage to an earlier divine Casear. Yet this transformation of Jewish Jerusalem to Roman Aelia was simply another part of Hadrian's Hellenization of his empire; a continual process that evolved as he traveled.

Aelia was repopulated from the surrounding Roman administrations; mainly Greek-speaking Syrians; some would have been Christian, including Jewish Christians. And slowly a well-planned Roman city took shape; one that assumed all the instruments of earthly desire that Herod had first brought: a circus for the races, baths for stimulus and relaxation, and the amphitheatre in which to entertain the populace with the illusion of Rome all-powerful. Contained within its grid of streets were two forums, one north of the Temple Mount and one to the west, where Hadrian constructed a majestic temple dedicated to Venus. Subsequently, Christians would claim that it had been built over the place where Christ was crucified.

According to Dio Cassius, over the foundations of Solomon's Temple on Temple Mount, Hadrian erected a massive structure dedicated to the god Jupiter,[12] chief among the gods. It was Jupiter who was entrusted with keeping the Emperor on the path of duty toward the State. Jupiter expected to dwell on high, so Temple Mount provided the ideal setting. The able architects and engineers working to give form to Hadrian's dreams must have seen in the fractured remains of the walls surrounding Temple Mount a resemblance to the Athenian Acropolis. They would have been tempted to shape Jupiter's temple to resemble the Parthenon when seen from city below,

placing its long elevation parallel to the west edge of Herod's vast wall, its main facade facing south, where public rituals would have been performed under the gaze of two commanding bronze figures of Hadrian, striding over the memory of Solomon's Temple (Figure 4.1).[13]

Figure 4.1 *Aelia Capitolina*. Maps © Carta Jerusalem, redrawn by permission


Triumphant Arch
Tombs
Inscription
Gate and Inscription
Piazza
Column
Wall (3-4th cent.)
Healing Temple
Pools
Market Place
Gate
Pool
Wall
Temple of Aphrodite
Cardo
Temple of Jupiter
Hadrian's Statue
The "Perforated Stone"
Gate
Bath houses
Street
Forum
Bath houses (?)
Inscription
Tetrapylon
Decumanus
Praetorium
Street
Remains of buildings
Inscription
Wall
Inscription
Wall (3-4th cent.)
Quarries
0
100
200
m
Pool and baths

Though Jerusalem and Jewish culture had been supplanted by this Roman Hellene city, politically moderate Jewish communities in Galilee and other surrounding lands continued to flourish. In the years just before the first war the Romans had given permission for Johanan ben Zakkai, the most respected Talmudic scholar, to set up an academy in the town of Jamnia, near the Judean coast, close to the present Tel Aviv. Here he evolved rabbinic practice that was not dependent on the Temple or the priesthood. Most significant among his teachings was the belief that acts of loving-kindness atone no less effectively than sacrifice at the Temple, and were indeed at the core of the universe since its creation. He cited the prophet Hosea: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."[14] Further, he believed that the study of the Torah, not sacrifice, was the central purpose of man, the most complete act of service to God. At the end of the first Christian century the academy in Jamnia had replaced Jerusalem as the center of Jewish religious thought. With the Temple in ruins, Zakkai ordained that certain privileges particular to Jerusalem and the sanctuary should be transferred to Jamnia and it was there, at this same time, that rabbinical scholars gave the Torah its definitive form.

By the second century CE, rituals once confined to the Temple were widely practiced to serve as memorials of the Sanctuary; study of the divine laws and acts of piety—rituals capable of fulfillment anywhere—replaced pilgrimage and sacrifice; scholar-rabbis replaced the aristocracy of the priesthood: all this led to the reformation of Jewish faith and community life.[15] The Temple, however, was not forgotten. Gradually the ban on Jews entering Aelia was relaxed and they began to return at the times of what had been the three great festivals, Passover, Shavuot and Sukkoth, gathering on Temple Mount at the place where they believed the altar for sacrifice had once stood. It would have been in the shadow of Hadrian's temple to Jupiter, which would dominate Aelia until the fourth century.

As Judaism was adjusting to the loss of the Temple, Christianity was also evolving and developing characteristics that diverged from its Jewish roots—the veneration of martyrs, the active promotion of the religion among all peoples, the withdrawal from the world by some, and an increasing aura of mysticism. Its evolution was taking place far from Jerusalem, in Rome and in the inner circles of the imperial court.

Constantine

Into the third century a clear sense of the exact place of Christ's death and resurrection had survived in the collective memory of the small Christian community in the city. Regardless of the fact that all traces had been removed in the building of Aelia, Christians insisted that Christ had died and been resurrected beneath Hadrian's temple to Venus, the city temple. Eusebius wrote of deliberate actions of Hadrian's builders to conceal “this sacred cave:”

> Certain impious and godless persons had thought to remove entirely from the eyes of men, supposing in their folly that thus they should be able effectually to obscure the truth. Accordingly they brought a quantity of earth from a distance with much labor, and covered the entire spot; then, having raised this to a moderate height, they paved it with stone, concealing the holy cave beneath this massive mound.

And on this foundation these godless persons at the behest of the Emperor had built:

> a truly dreadful sepulcher of souls…a gloomy shrine of lifeless idols to the impure spirit whom they call Venus, [daughter of Jupiter] and offering detestable oblations therein on profane and accursed altars For they supposed that their object could not otherwise be fully attained, than by thus burying the sacred cave beneath these foul pollutions.[16]

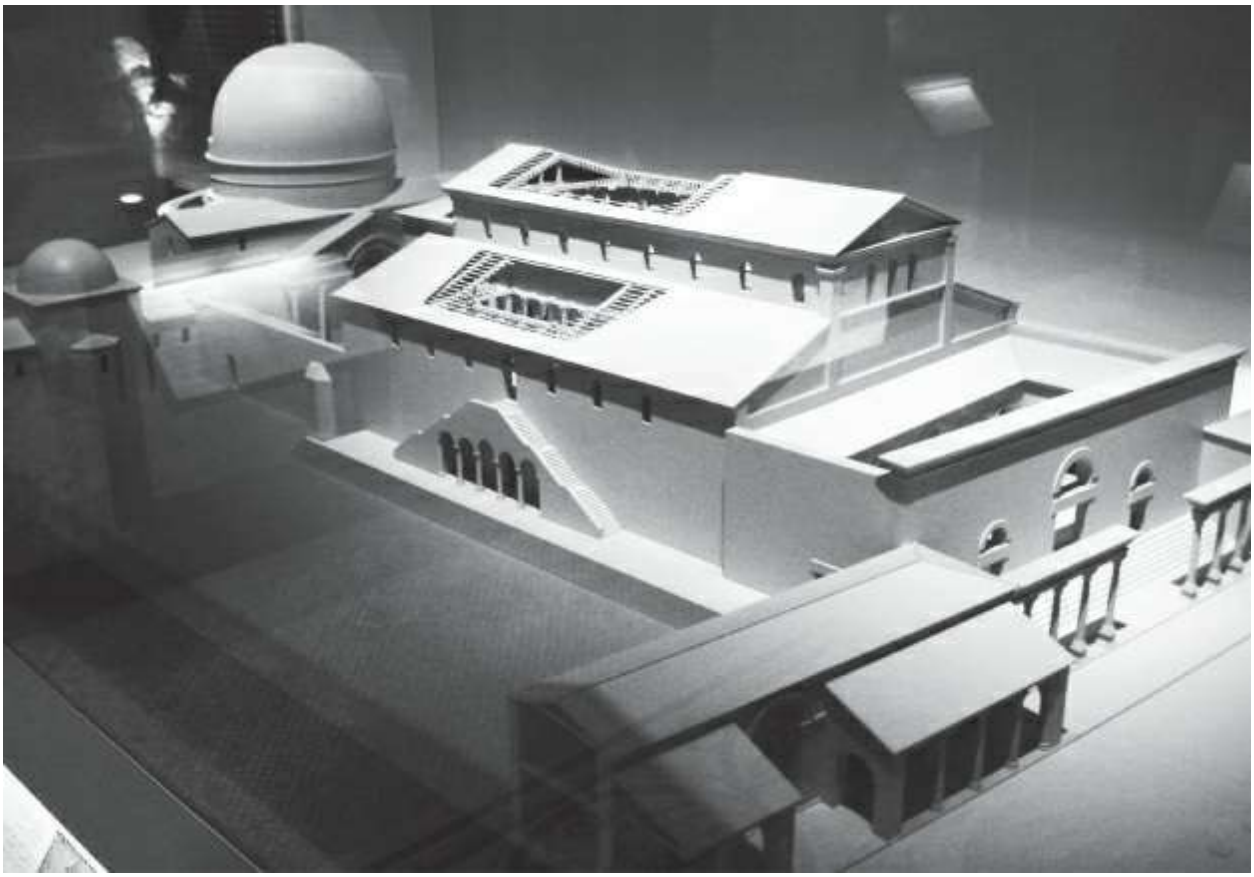
Hadrian's great temple to Venus in the Forum in Rome was favored by the city's prostitutes, which suggests the character of such “detestable oblations.”

Constantine the Great,[17] who reigned from 280 to 337, was the first Roman emperor to profess Christianity: he laid the basis for a Roman Christian state, from which would emerge the Byzantine Empire, and subsequently Western medieval culture. As well as the *Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius wrote the *Life of Constantine*. Here he recorded in detail the Emperor's decision to build “a Church at Jerusalem in the Holy Place of Our Savior's Resurrection.”

Given the fundamental significance of Christ's death and resurrection to early Christians, the places where they had occurred would have immediately become hallowed ground, marked perhaps by a simple structure where the faithful could gather in private. If this were the case, building the Temple to

Venus over it would have followed the ancient practice of displacing one shrine with another; a practice Constantine certainly followed in the creation of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Model of Constantine's Basilica. The dome of Anastasis covers the tomb of Christ on the left. The site of the crucifixion is placed in the adjoining court. From the diorama in the Tower of David Museum, Jerusalem. Photograph: Alan Balfour.



Constantine ordered that the temple to Venus be pulled down and the land:

> be thoroughly purified [and as soon as] his commands were issued, these engines of deceit were cast down from their proud eminence to the very ground, and the dwelling-places of error, with the statues and the evil spirits which they represented, were overthrown and utterly destroyed.
>
> Nor did the emperor's zeal stop here; but he gave further orders that the materials of what was thus destroyed, both stone and timber, should be removed and thrown as far from the spot as possible; and this command also was speedily executed. The emperor, however, was not satisfied with

having proceeded thus far: once more, fired with holy ardor, he directed that the ground itself should be dug up to a considerable depth, and the soil which had been polluted by the foul impurities of demon worship transported to a far distant place.

And all the earth was removed until the bedrock was revealed and there:

contrary to all expectation, the venerable and hollowed [sic] monument of our Savior's resurrection was discovered. Then indeed did this most holy cave present a faithful similitude of his return to life, in that, after lying buried in darkness, it again emerged to light, and afforded to all who came to witness the sight, a clear and visible proof of the wonders of which that spot had once been the scene, a testimony to the resurrection of the Savior clearer than any voice could give.[18]

Constantine immediately committed himself to building in Jerusalem a church that "should surpass all the Churches in the World in the Beauty of its Walls, its Columns, and Marbles." It would be named the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Eusebius wrote that it was consciously created to be in opposition to the memory to the Temple of the Jews; the people who caused the Christ's sacrifice:

on the very spot which witnessed the Savior's sufferings, a new Jerusalem was constructed, over against the one so celebrated of old, which, since the foul stain of guilt brought on it by the murder of the Lord, had experienced the last extremity of desolation, the effect of Divine judgment on its impious people. It was opposite this city [Temple Mount] that the emperor now began to rear a monument to the Savior's victory over death, with rich and lavish magnificence.[19]

The year was 335.

Whereas the Temple of Solomon had sat above the city on Temple Mount, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was embedded in the heart of a city once again named Jerusalem, and for all his omnipotence Constantine was not able to create a perfect site for this massive work. The irregular geometry of the plan clearly shows respect for the surrounding property owners. Eusebius wrote that its eastern gates sat "in the midst of the open market-place… afforded to passers-by on the outside a view of the interior which could not

fail to inspire astonishment." And all were welcome and entered through these gates into the cloistered forecourt and the narthex, the long, narrow, enclosed porch, crossing the entire width of a church at its entrance.

Visitors would have been struck by its resemblance to Constantine's basilica in Rome, built just five years earlier on the site of the martyrdom of St. Peter. This would have increased as they moved through the narthex and into the nave flanked, as in Rome, with double aisles, "…the church a noble work rising to a vast height, and of great extent both in length and breadth… being overlaid throughout with the purest gold, caused the entire building to glitter as it were with rays of light." And behind the altar "the hemisphere, the crowning part of the whole which rose to the very summit of the church encircled by twelve columns according to the number of the apostles, their capitals embellished with silver bowls of great size." Then through the rear wall of the church into a court "open to the pure air of heaven"…to the *Martyrion*, the cave tomb of Christ, held within a cylinder of stone beneath a massive dome, and "beautified with rare columns profusely enriched." This was "the chief part of the whole work, and the hallowed monument at which the angel, radiant with light had once declared to all that regeneration which was first manifested in the Savior's person."[20]

At the same time as Constantine was investing the imperial purse in magnifying the sacred performances of the Christians he was systematically destroying the temples and the likenesses of the ancient gods: "he used every means to rebuke the superstitious errors of the heathen. Hence the entrances of their temples in the several cities were left exposed to the weather, being stripped of their doors at his command; the tiling of others was removed, and their roofs destroyed." Then he sent "a few of his own friends…to visit each several province. Accordingly, sustained by confidence in the emperor's pious intentions and their own personal devotion to God, they passed through the midst of numberless tribes and nations, abolishing this ancient error in every city and country."[21]

It would have been Constantine who restored to the city the ancient name Jerusalem, so central to the life of and death of Christ, and it is probable that it was Constantine who ordered the destruction of Hadrian's Temple to Jupiter on Temple Mount. Imagine the sumptuous image of Jupiter being hauled carelessly through the temple doors "stripped…of their precious

materials…dragged from their places with ropes and as it were carried away captive, whom the dotage of mythology had esteemed as gods."[22]

Only one document survives to give an eyewitness account of Jerusalem late in the reign of Constantine. It is the journal of the Pilgrim of Bordeaux, who journeyed to the Holy Land in 333. The text has an eager immediacy. Approaching the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the pilgrim writes:

> On the left hand is the little hill of Golgotha where the Lord was crucified. About a stone's throw from thence is a vault wherein His body was laid, and rose again on the third day. There, at present, by the command of the Emperor Constantine, has been built a basilica, that is to say, a church of wondrous beauty, having at the side reservoirs from which water is raised, and a bath behind in which infants are washed.

Later he approached Temple Mount:

> There is…a crypt, in which Solomon used to torture demons. There…the corner of a most high tower, [the Pinnacle of the Temple] where the Lord ascended, and he spoke to him who was tempting him, and the Lord stated to him: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, but him only shalt thou serve. And under the pinnacle of the tower itself are very many chambers, where Solomon had the palace.

These were Herod's vaults built to support the Stoa.

After barely 200 years myth has replaced any memory of the reality of the place, and all is seen only in connection to Christ. The Pilgrim appears to be in no doubt about where the Solomon's Temple once stood:

> And on the temple mount itself, where the temple was which Solomon built, the blood of Zacharias[23] on the marble pavement before the altar, is poured there, you would say, even today. There are also visible the marks of the shoe nails of the soldiers who slew him, throughout the whole area, so that you would think they were made in wax. [He then adds, almost as an afterthought] There are here two statues of Hadrian, and not far from the statues there is a bored-through stone, to which the Jews come every year and anoint it, and lament themselves with moans and tear their clothes, and thus depart.[24]

The statues must have been part of the forecourt of the temple to Jupiter, and, while Constantine felt justified in destroying the temple, devotion to his

imperial ancestors would have preserved the figures of Hadrian. But what was this “bored-through stone”? Despite continued restrictions by the Roman authorities, and the reformation of Jewish religious practice, fourth-century Jews continued to make pilgrimage to Temple Mount on the High Holy Days. Yet nowhere in the exhaustive descriptions of the succession of temples that had centered the worship of the Jews for a thousand years had there been any mention of a pierced stone. Certainly not within the ordered courts and sacred halls of Herod's Temple. Was it a fragment of the Jupiter's temple that had resisted demolition? “Bored through” suggest that human hands had worked on it. The Romans, who would have been thorough in destroying the temple of the Jews, may have been less aggressive in the demolition of Jupiter's temple, for many continued to trust only the old gods.

Toward the end of the fourth century, the learned St. Jerome saw similar scenes, though he made no mention of a pierced stone:

> Right to the present those faithless people who killed the servant of God and even, most terribly, the Son of God himself, are banned from the entering Jerusalem except for weeping to let them attempt to buy back, at the price of their tears, the city they once sold for the blood of Christ and not even their tears be free. You can see with your own eyes on the [anniversary of the] day Jerusalem was captured and destroyed by the Romans, a pious crowd that comes together, woebegone women and old men weighed down by with rage and years. That mob of wretched congregates and while the manger of Lord sparkles, the Church of his resurrection glows, and the banner of his cross shines fourth from the Mount of Olives, those miserable people groan over the ruins of their Temple. They groan over the ashes of the sanctuary, the destroyed altar, over the high pinnacles of the Temple where they once threw down James the brother of the Lord.[25]

The ashes were a mere figure of speech, but the pinnacle was real, and the destroyed altar could have been the “bored-through stone” seen by the Bordeaux pilgrim.

Despite Constantine's campaign to discredit and ridicule the ancient gods, the aristocracy continued to trust and find deep satisfaction in the old beliefs; so much more varied and satisfying than the naiveté of the teachings of the so-called Messiah. In 361, 25 years after the death of Constantine, his

nephew Julian the Apostate[26] was proclaimed emperor by his troops. That same year this scholarly Emperor publicly declared his conversion to paganism. Julian had been baptized and raised Christian, yet it was Christians who had murdered his father and other members of his family. In his *Historia Eclesiastica* Socrates Scholasticus,[27] offered evidence of Julian's many pronged assaults on the Christians.

> The emperor in another attempt to molest the Christians exposed his superstition. Being fond of sacrificing, he not only himself delighted in the blood of victims, but considered it an indignity offered to him, if others did not do likewise. And as he found but few persons of this stamp, he sent for the Jews and enquired of them why they abstained from sacrificing, since the law of Moses enjoined it? On their replying that it was not permitted them to do this in any other place than Jerusalem, he immediately ordered them to rebuild Solomon's temple.

And some time in the summer of 362 CE:

> The Jews, who had been long desirous of obtaining a favorable opportunity for rearing their temple afresh in order that they might therein offer sacrifice, applied themselves very vigorously to the work. Moreover, they conducted themselves with great insolence toward the Christians, and threatened to do them as much mischief, as they had themselves suffered from the Romans. The emperor having ordered that the expenses of this structure should be defrayed out of the public treasury, all things were soon provided, such as timber and stone, burnt brick, clay, lime, and all other materials necessary for building.[28]

The same events are told with a broader perspective by a Christian lawyer, Salaminius Hermias Sozomen, whose church history rivaled, with more style, that of the elder Scholasticus. He offered more detail on the extent and urgency of the plans to rebuild the Temple helped by the pagans who sought “to falsify the prophecies of Christ”:

> The Jews entered upon the undertaking, without reflecting that, according to the prediction of the holy prophets, it could not be accomplished… They sought for the most skillful artisans, collected materials, cleared the ground, and entered so earnestly upon the task, that even the women carried heaps of earth, and brought their necklaces and other female

> ornaments towards defraying the expense. The emperor, the other pagans, and all the Jews, regarded every other undertaking as secondary in importance to this. Although the pagans were not well disposed towards the Jews…they assisted them in this enterprise, because they reckoned upon its ultimate success, and hoped by this means to falsify the prophecies of Christ.

As the Jews began to build, in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher Cyril, the Bishop of Jerusalem, preached to his congregation Christ's prophesy that the Temple of Solomon would be destroyed. The following day, according to Scholasticus, “a mighty earthquake tore up the stones of the old foundations of the temple and dispersed them altogether with the adjacent edifices.” Word spread through Jewish communities across the region, and “a vast multitude” flocked to Jerusalem only to be confronted by a second disaster:

> Fire came down from heaven and consumed all the builders' tools: so that the flames were seen preying upon mallets, irons to smooth and polish stones, saws, hatchets, adzes, in short all the various implements which the workmen had procured as necessary for the undertaking; and the fire continued burning among these for a whole day.

At that moment, he wrote, many Jews pretended to acknowledge Christ as their savior, yet underneath they still clung to Judaism. He added “Even a third miracle…failed to lead them to a belief of the truth:” For, the next night, luminous impressions of a cross appeared imprinted on garments [of the Jews] which at daybreak they in vain attempted to rub or wash out. …and thus was the temple, instead of being rebuilt, at that time wholly overthrown. The first event could have been natural; the second a deliberate attack, the third moved into the realm of myth.

Sozomen describes the same sequence of events. Yet the tone of his conclusion suggests that even he was not convinced:

> If any one does not feel disposed to believe my narrative, let him go and be convinced by those who heard the facts I have related from the eyewitnesses of them, for they are still alive. Let him inquire, also, of the Jews and pagans who left the work in an incomplete state, or who, to speak more accurately, were able to commence it.[29]

The Christians of Jerusalem were fortunate not to suffer Julian's retribution

for what appears to have been violent interference concealed behind tales of divine intervention in blocking the attempt to rebuild the Temple. In nearby Damascus and Beirut he ordered churches burned, and, elsewhere, bishops were banished and Christian congregations forced to worship other gods, Bacchus is mentioned. Julian would presumably have persisted in his plan to rebuild the Temple of the Jews had not a more earthly conflict interfered. The following year he initiated, unprovoked, war with the Persians and was killed in the action, a death which must have seemed to the Christians as miraculous as the marks of the cross on the clothes of the Jews. His successor, Valentinian, a moderate Christian, quickly reestablished support for the Church.

Beyond the myths and the capricious behavior of the Emperor Julian, these events show the urgency with which the Church acted to block any attempt at rebuilding the Temple, to preserve the evidence of the divine nature of Christ's prediction. His answer to the disciples “Not…one stone upon another” had become a fundamental validation of the faith. Though it must have been clear to many that there could be no divine connection between Christ's wishful thinking and the tactical decisions of the Roman army and the engineers who destroyed the Temple: it was such a fateful coincidence.

Early in the fifth century, a more tolerant attitude toward Jews briefly emerged. In 439 Empress Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II,[30] Emperor of the eastern half of a divided Roman Empire, and generous benefactor to Jerusalem, granted a request allowing Jews to return to the city.[31] Word was immediately sent to communities across the Empire and into Persia saying “the Romans have ordered our city returned to us.” The Christian reaction was swift and brutal, led by a fanatical monk Barsauma (of whom it was said, he neither lay down nor sat). As Jews gathered in the city and moved toward Temple Mount they were stoned from all sides. Many died, yet survivors were able to seize Barsauma. They demanded justice from the Roman authorities and even attempted to enlist the support of the Empress, who was in the city. She wavered and after much consideration the authorities concluded that the stones had come from heaven and all the deaths had been from natural causes. The monk was released; the city again forbidden to Jews.

A letter written by Eucherius, Bishop of Lyon, to one Presbyter Faustus

describes a visit to the city in the fifth century. The memory of Solomon's Temple persisted:

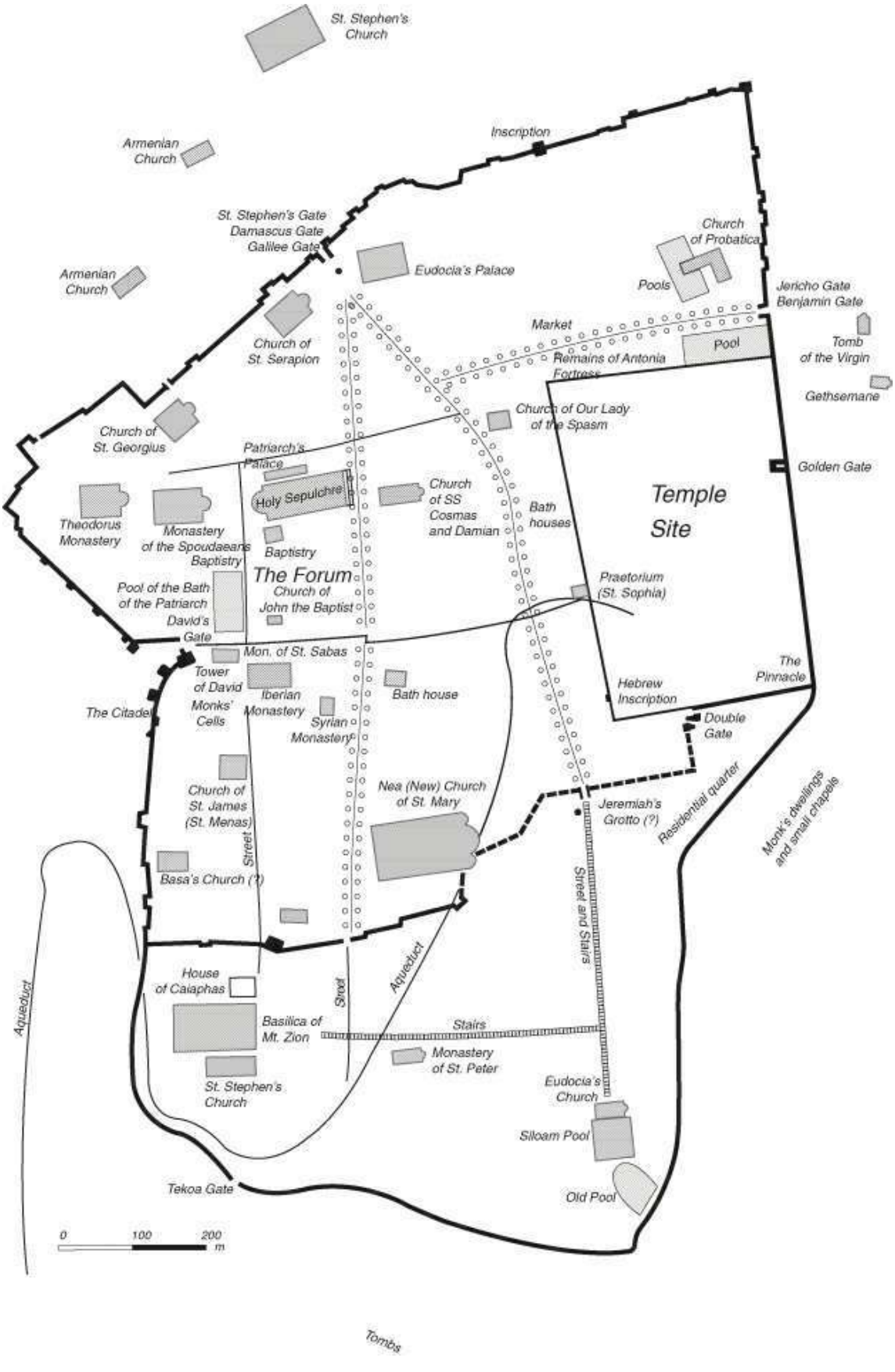
> As you enter the city from the northern side, the first of the holy places… is called the Martyrium, which was by Constantine with great reverence not long ago built up. Next, to the west one visits the connecting places Golgotha and the Anastasis; indeed the Anastasis is in the place of the resurrection, and Golgotha is in the middle between the Anastasis and the Martyrium, the place of the Lord's passion, in which still appears that rock which once endured the very cross on which the Lord was crucified…The Temple in truth, located in the lower part of the east and built up magnificently, was once a wonderful thing, out of which a certain pinnacle of one wall in ruins is left, the rest to the foundations thoroughly destroyed.[32]

Into the sixth century the city began to draw pilgrims from across the Christian world; with them came the creation of guidebooks, and with each repetition came the polishing of myths. Such holy places were not merely mementos, but were experienced as earthly replicas of the divine.[33] The anonymous author of the guide quaintly named for a creature in Greek myth *Breiarius*, wrote that the great court behind Constantine's Holy Sepulcher was "where the Lord was crucified" then added it was also where "Adam was formed out of clay; there Abraham offered his own son to Isaac. And in front of the tomb of Christ the altar where Holy Zacharias was killed and where his dried blood may still be seen"[34] …The same Zacharias whose dried blood in the previous century could be seen on Temple Mount. Past events fundamental to both faiths, both in reality and myth, were moving from Temple Mount to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.[35] Before drawing attention "to the pinnacle on which Satan set the Lord" (ever a favorite), the guide offered a suggestive note "From here you come to the temple built by Solomon but there is nothing left apart from a single cave,"—the bored-through stone?

Jerusalem had become, in the Christian imagination, the earthly mirror of the spiritual world. It was the source of life, fertility, salvation, and enlightenment. The faithful were drawn to it. They had to experience the desolation on Temple Mount as Christ prophesied, and although they had to suppress the reality of their own flesh to know God, in an existence that was

merely a prelude of temptation before the reality in heaven, they felt a compelling need to experience the flesh and bones of others of Christ, the apostles, and all the martyrs. And in response to the sheer numbers, the fabric of the churches and shrines were expanded and reshaped, not only to manage the crowds, but to let the faithful feel as close to the presence of the relics as possible—even touching them when necessary, so there would be no doubt in their efficacy as food for the soul. Faith was not enough—there had to be evidence: in pilgrimage they were imitating Christ, seeking to become as one with him and share in the plan for divine salvation in the creation and the continuous structuring of the cosmos[36] (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Christian Jerusalem. Maps © Carta Jerusalem, redrawn by permission


St. Stephen's Church
Armenian Church
Inscription
St. Stephen's Gate
Damascus Gate
Galilee Gate
Armenian Church
Eudocia's Palace
Church of Probatica
Pools
Jericho Gate
Benjamin Gate
Church of St. Serapion
Market
Pool
Tomb of the Virgin
Remains of Antonia Fortress
Gethsemane
Church of St. Georgius
Church of Our Lady of the Spasm
Patriarch's Palace
Golden Gate
Holy Sepulchre
Church of SS Cosmas and Damian
Bath houses
Temple Site
Theodorus Monastery
Monastery of the Spoudaeans
Baptistry
Baptistry
The Forum
Pool of the Bath of the Patriarch
Church of John the Baptist
Praetorium (St. Sophia)
David's Gate
Mon. of St. Sabas
Tower of David
Iberian Monastery
Bath house
The Pinnacle
Hebrew Inscription
The Citadel
Monks' Cells
Syrian Monastery
Double Gate
Church of St. James (St. Menas)
Nea (New) Church of St. Mary
Jeremiah's Grotto (?)
Residential quarter
Monk's dwellings and small chapels
Street
Basa's Church (?)
Street and Stairs
House of Caiaphas
Street
Aqueduct
Aqueduct
Basilica of Mt. Zion
Stairs
Monastery of St. Peter
St. Stephen's Church
Eudocia's Church
Siloam Pool
Tekoa Gate
Old Pool
0
100
200
m
Tombs

Also in the sixth century, three very different events transformed the landscapes of desire and ambition across the entire ancient world—plague, the fall of Rome, and the building of the great church of *Hagia Sophia*, Holy Wisdom, in Constantinople. All of which in intersecting ways would create the context that gave rise to Islam and would subsequently make Jerusalem the symbolic heart of a new religion.

The Plague

Beginning in the sixth century a most virulent form of bubonic plague began to spread through the Western world. It lingered for two centuries killing millions, destroying economies, transforming religions, and undermining the structure of many societies. First recorded in East Africa, it traveled with trade routes to Yemen then with devastating effect through Alexandria into the Mediterranean then in all directions. As it moved through Palestine, Antioch suffered, yet Jerusalem appeared to have been spared, and there is no evidence of its impact on the trade routes through the lands south of Judea—the Arabian Peninsula. In 542 it struck Constantinople, capital of the Eastern Roman Empire and devastated the city.

It was in the reign of the greatest of the Byzantine emperors, Justinian.[37] Procopius, his official historian, offered a clinical description of the disease in its more virulent pneumonic form, wherein the bacilli settle in the lungs of the victims. He wrote of:

> a bubonic swelling developed; and this took place not only in the particular part of the body which is called boubon, that is, "below the abdomen," but also inside the armpit, and in some cases also beside the ears, and at different points on the thighs.

Every burial ground in the city became full, and trenches could not be dug fast enough to keep up with the pace of death:

> but later on those who were making these trenches, no longer able to keep up with the number of the dying, mounted the towers of the fortifications…and tearing off the roofs threw the bodies there in complete disorder; and they piled them up just as each one happened to fall, and filled practically all the towers with corpses, and then covered

> them again with their roofs. As a result of this an evil stench pervaded the city and distressed the inhabitants still more, and especially whenever the wind blew fresh from that quarter.[38]

In three or four months it was over, but the effect was catastrophic: “at first the deaths were a little more than the normal, then the mortality rose still higher, and afterwards the tale of dead reached five thousand each day, and again it even came to ten thousand and still more than that.” In all the affected cities and the surrounding countryside populations were halved. Labor of all kinds became scarce or nonexistent, crops were left in the fields, ships unmanned; workers demanded higher and higher wages, which imperial edict attempted to control.[39] Escalating wages made slaves so wealthy they bought their freedom, essentially ending the slave-based economies of the ancient world. And its aftermath, Christians increasingly found comfort in the presence of the Virgin Mary.[40] In the same year as the plague struck Constantinople, Justinian commissioned the building of a massive church in Jerusalem dedicated to the Virgin (destroyed by an earthquake in the seventh century).

From Constantinople, the plague moved into Persia and lingered in Europe well into the seventh century before disappearing.[41] Some historians see a direct link between the spread of the plague and Justinian's desire to reunite the two halves of the Roman Empire and bring the city of Rome back into his control. They view the increased trade he encouraged as aiding the spread of the disease.[42] For the next century, the outcome of conflicts across the western world, from North Africa to Italy to Persia, would be directly related to the degree to which the disease had crippled economies, reduced populations and weakened military strength.

The Fall of Rome

The decline of the western Roman Empire was painfully slow and confused, but the death of what had been Imperial Rome was fast and total. In *City of God*, St. Augustine, the most influential Christian scholar after St. Paul wrote of Rome as the city of the flesh, and demanded that all Christians remove it from their consciousness—from the very idea of its existence—if they were

to find the “City of God.” For many, the fall of Rome would have a divine symmetry with the destruction of Herod's Temple: it was a victory of Christian faith over paganism. Yet, as Rome faded in power, it rose to rival Jerusalem as a place of pilgrimage. Its decay became as meaningful a symbol of divine justice to Christians as the desolation on Temple Mount.

From the third century, northern Europe had come increasingly under the control of the Germanic tribes, the Goths, and by the late fifth, the Ostrogoths (eastern Goths) under Theodoric took possession of Italy. In seeking to recreate a united Roman empire, Justinian charged his general Belisarius to retake Italy and Rome, and this was only achieved after a costly and devastating operation. Yet the city could not be held because the plague in Constantinople prevented Justinian sending reinforcements.

The Goths regained possession in 546, after a siege lasting three months: a siege that marked the death of the imperial city. Totila, the Gothic general, at first treated the population with respect, then declared that if they refused to surrender he would demolish the city; reduce it to the level of a cow pasture. He immediately began demolishing the city walls. His Byzantine adversary Belisarius, sent a letter pleading that the city be spared: “Rome's monuments” he wrote

> belong to posterity, and an outrage committed upon them will rightly be regarded as a great injustice to all future generations as well as to the memory of those who created them. Therefore consider well. Should you be victorious in this war, Rome destroyed will be your own loss, preserved it will be your fairest possession. Should it be your fortune to be defeated, the conqueror will owe you gratitude if you spare Rome, whereas if you demolish it, there will be no reason for clemency.[43]

Totila heeded his plea and stopped the demolition, choosing instead to drive the whole population out of the city, removing its lifeblood. District by district, block by block, his disciplined troops cleared every building driving every man, woman, and child from every tenement, villa, palace, and monastery, out of the city and into the devastation of the countryside to fend for themselves. For forty days Rome was completely abandoned save for wandering cattle and packs of stray dogs. Ancient Rome, that monstrous engine driven by a million people, protected by the mightiest of the gods, the controlling center of a once vast empire, was empty—silent, save for the

sound of birds, barking dogs, and the rushing of the Tiber.

In *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon[44] imagined that Totila felt pity and reverence for the empty city as he wandered through the Forum and looked up at what had been the palace of the emperor. Entering the Forum he would have passed by the pagan temples; some dismantled, some still containing the power and mystery of the ancient gods yet empty and locked for more than a century. Then by the long-abandoned basilicas, filled with the smells of neglect. The Ostrogoths were Arian Christians, whose heresy was their belief that Christ was not truly divine, but they were Christian nonetheless, and Totila could have offered thanks for his victory in the nearest church to the Forum, Saint Maria. He would have entered a nave that has changed little to this day. Now called Maria Maggiore, it was founded around 440 and the only interruption in daily service since then was these weeks when all were driven from the city.

When Totila and his army left to fend off an attack from the south, the Byzantines retook the city and rebuilt the walls. It is estimated that no more than 30,000 souls returned after the great emptying—wandering back into the desolation. While the buildings remained standing, the unrelenting stress of loss and recapture demoralized the survivors and ravaged the surrounding countryside: aqueducts were demolished, all farming and trading ceased, the economy was ruined. At the end of the sixth century Rome fell, unopposed, to the German Lombards.

Gregory the Great[45] was elected pope in 590. His biographer recorded that it was a time when:

> The Longobards were looting and moving all through the countryside. The city flooded by the Tiber: the granaries on its banks destroyed together with the old Temples, [the river] sweeping along carrying rattlesnakes and dead cattle [Gibbon translated as dragons]. People by the hundreds are starving and dying from epidemics. The inhabitants in flight, the population decimated, the economy n shambles, only one private banker left in the city.[46]

In the fourteen years he served, he transformed Rome from a place of despair and desolation into the spiritual heart of the western world. For Gregory, the destruction of the old city was God's punishment for its sins. The new Rome gained a strange and tragic power from nestling in the ruins

of the old. All the worldly pleasures that the city had so spectacularly magnified were now denied: the urges of the flesh purged, the excitement of the chariot races, the bleeding gladiators, the obscene plays, the warm baths, all acts of pleasures past now gone, yet the stages on which they were performed, though abandoned, were all too visible.

Throughout the city new churches were built, simple structures; instruments of the spirit, offering a glimpses of heaven, and miracles, guaranteed by the bones and hair of the saints and martyrs they enshrined. Pilgrimage to Rome was actively promoted as an alternate to Jerusalem, as a path to unquestionable forgiveness of sins and to salvation.

More than the ruination of the buildings, the demise of ancient Rome marked the death of the ancient gods that had guided and comforted the known world for thousands of years.[47] More than the destruction of Rome, this was the end of an ancient understanding of the nature and significance of existence. It marked the triumph of Christianity over the old gods, a triumph which would impose its morality on all aspects of life, impose a doctrine that viewed the reality of human existence merely a prelude to life fulfilled in the "City of God." Reality moved from an existence ruled by the flesh to one ruled by the spirit, and this would transform all. The flesh of body was seen as sinful; it gave rise to feelings that had to be controlled and internalized, and all actions had to done in the awareness of an all-seeing God. Such an existence, dominated by total obligation to the moral code of such a God, greatly diminished the richness of earthly, lived experience. In attempting to reveal the nature of the divine all the arts withdrew from any sense of the actual. To conform, the body could only be illustrated when in an ecstasy of the spirit; individual perspective disappeared in the omnipresence of God. Christ's family, his servants, and the reality of the afterlife would henceforth consume the Christian imagination.

Hagia Sophia

As Rome was dying, Constantinople was celebrating the building of the greatest church in Christendom, Hagia Sophia. It is as if all the ambition and energy that had for a thousand years driven the vast and complex machinery of the old Roman Empire imploded and was transformed into a profoundly

dense vessel, a spiritual black dwarf formed from the collapse of myriad ancient pantheons. All the churches of early Christianity now seem earthbound when compared with the transcendent power of Hagia Sophia. Here, for the first time, was soaring sensual intimation of a heavenly realm.

Hagia Sophia, the Church of the Holy Wisdom, was commissioned and shaped in the imagination of Emperor Justinian I, and built over the site of a basilica founded by Constantine some 200 years earlier.[48] Designed by mathematician Anthemius of Tralles and architect Isidore of Miletus, it was, and remains, a brilliant demonstration of the most advanced technology of its time. The almost square plan effortlessly carries a dome 100 feet in diameter, 200 feet above the floor.[49]

Procopius, Justinian's official historian, was present at consecration: he wrote of what he called the Great Church:

> Whoever enters there to worship perceives at once that it is not by any human strength or skill, but by the favor of God, that this work has been perfected; the mind rises sublime to commune with God, feeling that He cannot be far off, but must especially love to dwell in the place which He has chosen.[50]

Its form is wholly concerned with containing a vast sphere of space, beneath a dome which, in the words of Procopius, “from the lightness of the building…does not appear to rest upon a solid foundation, but to cover the place beneath as though it were suspended from heaven by the fabled golden chain,” and able at any moment to rise to heaven.

At a rededication in 563,[51] Paul the Silentiary, a priestly official in the court of Justinian, prepared an explication of the wonders of the restored church:

> And when the first gleam of light, rosy-armed driving away the dark shadows, leapt from arch to arch, then all the princes and people with one voice hymned their songs of prayer and praise; and as they came to the sacred courts, it seemed to them as if the mighty arches were set in heaven.

Unlike the Pantheon, which seemed to pull the sun to earth, this great church “rises into the immeasurable air the great helmet [of the dome], which, bending over, like the radiant heavens, embraces the church.” Though

its massive bulk dominated the center of Constantinople, Hagia Sophia had no grand public face. All its energy was held within, though all could feel the visceral strength in the massive walls that still rise to support and resist the pressure of the dome. And God was ever-present within, not in trivial icons and relics, but in the marble panels that dressed the walls. These not only revealed the hand of God, but the extent and diversity of his empire. The Silentary knew where every slab of stone had been quarried and read into each the image it evoked in his imagination; landscapes of utter strangeness gathered on the walls and spreading pavements of the great church. He calls them marble pastures:

> From the Lydian creek came the bright stone mingled with streaks of red. Stone too there is that the Lybian [sic] sun, warming with his golden light, has nurtured in the deep-bosomed clefts of the hills of the Moors, of crocus color glittering like gold; and the product of the Celtic crags, a wealth of crystals, like milk poured here and there on a flesh of glittering black. There is the precious onyx, as if gold were shining through it; and the marble that the land of Atrax yields, not from some upland glen, but from the level plains; in parts fresh green as the sea or emerald stone, or again like blue cornflowers in grass, with here and there a drift of fallen snow,—a sweet mingled contrast on the dark shining surface.[52]

Hagia Sophia claimed the center of the Christian world and the Christian imagination. It offered the most complete experience of the heavenly realm, the Silentary continued:

> Thus through the spaces of the great church come rays of light, expelling clouds of care, and filling the mind with joy. The sacred light cheers all… not only does it guide the merchant at night, like the rays from the Pharos on the coast of Africa, but it also shows the way to the living God.

And in the evening, beneath the dome, points of light from the numerous of candelabra hanging just above their heads, led the worshipers to feel they were walking among the stars: “Verily you might say that you gazed on the bright constellation of the Heavenly Crown by the Great Bear, and the neighboring Dragon. …the whole heaven, scattered with glittering stars, opens before them, while the night seems to smile on their way.” “I have outdone you, Solomon” Justinian is said to have cried out when he first stood beneath the dome.

The presence of Hagia Sophia overshadowed the shrines of the new Rome and the new Jerusalem. It seemed to possess the heavens and would compel Christian desire for centuries to come. In the seventh century it would also compel the imagination of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers.

Madaba

Just as text of the Silentary allows entry deep into the imagination of Byzantium there is another document that survives, recording the reality of Jerusalem in last decade of sixth century. It is a mosaic map covering all of Palestine from the Sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean. Many towns, Gaza, Bethlehem, Jericho, are represented by symbols, but dominating the center is Jerusalem, shown in a detailed though abstracted aerial view. It takes little effort to adjust to the stylized conventions of the mosaic and enter fully into the reality these lands at the end of the sixth century.

The mosaic was made around 590 CE in the town of Madaba, east of Jerusalem, where the church fathers had formed a school of the mosaic arts. Its delineation is so clear that the details can be read into the streets of old Jerusalem today. The walled city in the mosaic is entered on the left through the grandest of ancient gates, now the Damascus Gate. Once through the gate there is a small plaza marked by a Roman votive column, its place now lost among the huddle of moneychangers and vegetable stalls that occupy the space (Plate 15).

Drawn strongly across the middle is a powerful colonnaded street, the columns and the red roofs they support are quite clear; it is the Cardo, the central lateral street of all Roman towns and, though the colonnade is gone and the street now but a narrow lane, yet still the commercial heart of old Jerusalem. Halfway along the Cardo are the great monuments from the Christian world of the sixth century. Reading from the bottom: the tomb of Christ–the “Martyrium,” with its golden dome; above it is a dark rectangle that marks the site of the crucifixion, leading the eye to the expansive red roof of the Holy Sepulcher. The mosaic image of the Church is basic, yet it still conveys key details of the structure; not only the three entrance doors and a suggestion of the court facing on to the Cardo, but also the awkward asymmetry of the whole.

Out of the Damascus Gate another colonnaded street curves east, as it does to this day, and arrives both at the path to the present St. Stephen's Gate and to Temple Mount. There are five structures close to Temple Mount. At the top, immediately to the left of the gate, is a roof structure that has been identified as the Antonia, Herod's fortress. This sits alongside the mysterious Beautiful Gate, so clearly described that it must have been an active gate into the city at that time and would have led those entering by it across the wasteland that was Temple Mount. A restored fragment of Herod's wall can be seen at the southwest corner of the Temple platform, forming the tower, the “pinnacle of the rock”; the stage for Christ's imagined conflict with the Devil. It is attached to a Church, identified, appropriately, as the Church of the Pinnacle of the Temple. At the right end, the east end of the Cardo, is Justinian's New Church of the Mother of God.[53]

The pleasure in reading and rereading these descriptive traces is not just in their clarity; it is in the way they allow the imagination to enter into the reality of Jerusalem before the city fell once again in the wars with Persia. There is also a strange reassurance in discovering that despite all the dreadful events that have marked its history the actual physical city has remained remarkably unchanged.

The Persian War

In 610, Persian armies led by King Khosrow II[54] invaded the eastern lands of Byzantium. As the Persians advanced, the Byzantine emperor, Phocas, without reason, decreed that all Jews under his rule convert to Christianity. The Jewish population in the cities in the path of the invasion immediately joined forces with the Persians and the Byzantine army was forced into retreat. Emperor Phocus was deposed by his troops and killed.

After capturing Antioch and Damascus, the Persian forces[55] laid siege to and then took Jerusalem in 614. Though there was fierce resistance by a group of young Christians, who believed their city would be saved by divine intervention, the Christian patriarch accepted the terms of the Persian occupation, including the presence of Persian troops. Within a month, a Christian force drove out the Persians, reclaimed the city and massacred the

Jewish population. Upon learning of this, a Persians force returned in violence. In reestablishing control they smashed major shrines, set fire to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and killed a large part of the Christian population. A contemporary account records the Persians raging into the city "like infuriated beasts and irritated serpents." The people tried to hide, seeking sanctuary in the churches, clutching at the altars, but they were caught and the Persians "like mad dogs tore with their teeth the flesh of the faithful and respected none—neither child nor baby—neither priest nor monk —virgin nor widow…"[56]

Those Christians who managed to flee looked back and "fell to sobbing and lamenting…ashes on their heads, other rubbed their face in the dust…tore their hair when they beheld the holy Anastasis afire." Those who were captured were given into the custody of Jews from surrounding towns. In the Christian retelling of the events Jewish guards demanded that they covert to Judaism or die, with the decree of the Byzantine Emperor still fresh in their memory. "[T]he Christians chose death rejoicing because they were being slain for Christ's sake."[57] The city was left in the control of a Jewish administration that lasted from 614 to 617, during which "the Jewish leaders of the city made sacrifices, given the unconstrained access [to Temple Mount] for the first time in four hundred years."[58] Though there was mention of booths being erected during Sukkoth, there is no evidence that plans were made to rebuild the temple. After 617 the Persians concluded that it was politically more constructive to deal with the Christians, the majority population in the region, and the Jews were dispossessed.

The Byzantine court and its new Emperor Heraclius viewed the fall of Jerusalem as divine punishment for the sins of its people. Sergius, patriarch of Constantinople, called for a holy war against the Persians and supplied the funds to support it. The integrity of the faith demanded that Jerusalem and the True Cross be recovered. War was declared against the Persians in 622, a war that can be viewed as the first crusade. What began in religious passion ended six years later in the exhaustion of the imperial wills of both Persia and Byzantium.[59] In the closing months a field of battle was prepared near Nineveh, but as the Byzantine army approached, the Persian king, exhausted and sick from the war, fled. His army condemned him to death[60] leaving his eldest son to sign a peace treaty with Heraclius.

In capturing Jerusalem the Persians had taken as gifts for their Queen Myriam, a Nestorian Christian, the most precious relics of the crucifixion, the "True Cross," the spear that had pierced Christ's side, the sponge that carried vinegar to his mouth, and the onyx cup from the last supper. The peace treaty allowed for their return. In March 629, the "True Cross" was carried in splendid procession into Jerusalem by the Emperor Heraclius. Carried high above the crowds, the procession moved solemnly and grandly into the city to a ruined Holy Sepulcher.[61] Though the events were fourteen years in the past, the Christians had neither forgotten nor forgiven the Jewish role in the Persian massacre. With the resumption of a Christian administration, many Jews fled the city. The patriarch of Jerusalem executed those who were known to have taken part in the killings. Others were pardoned but all were forbidden the full practice of their religion. Five years later, in 634, he decreed that all Jews must have a Christian baptism.

In 638 Jerusalem fell to a new and unknown force—the armies of Islam.

Even though they shared the same fundamental history, Christianity had found no commonality with the constant laws of Judaism. In the following century both would have a profound influence on a wholly new concept of God in Islam.

Notes

[1] Recorded in the writing of Eiphanius and the Bordeaux Pilgrim.

[2] From *The Mishna*, translated by Herbert H. Danby. Oxford University Press, 1933. In F. E. Peters (1985), *Jerusalem: The Holy City in the Eyes of Chroniclers, Visitors, Pilgrims, and Prophets from the days of Abraham to the beginnings of Modern Times*, p. 121. This and all subsequent quotations from this work are © 1985 Princeton University Press. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press.

[3] Publius Aelius Hadrianus. Reigned from 117 CE to 138.

[4] His greatest artistic achievement was his villa outside Rome, which was formed from a collaged re-creation of his favorite places.

[5] From Dio Cassius, *Romaika* LXIX 12, translated by Earnest Cary. Cambridge, MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1914–1927. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 127.

[6] In the writings of a leading rabbi, Akiva ben Yosef.

[7] Also spelled Koseba, Kosiba, or Kochba, and also called Bar Koziba.

[8] Also called Eusebius Pamphili.

[9] Eusebius *Ecclesiastical History* IV: 6, 2, translated by Earnest Cary. Cambridge MA: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1914–1927. (www.newadvent.org/fathers/250104.htm, accessed April 2, 2012).

[10] The evidence for this is circumstantial, but for three years the revolutionaries issued coins bearing the name Jerusalem.

[11] The Romans also suffered great loss. When Hadrian reported in writing to the Senate he omitted the phrase which customarily would open such a letter "If you and our children are in health, it is well; I and the legions are in health."

[12] Latin Juppiter, Iovis, or Diespiter.

[13] In the absence of physical or eyewitness evidence, F. E. Peters argues that no temple was built on the Temple Mount: he believes that Hadrian's temple to Jupiter was built where the Holy Sepulcher now stands.

[14] Hosea 6: 6.

[15] This based on material from the *Internet Medieval Source Book*, Paul Halsall, June 1997: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.asp (accessed March 10, 2012).

[16] Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, Book III, XXVI. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, ed. P. Schaff and H. Wace. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co. 1890 (www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf201.txt, accessed March 10, 2012).

[17] Flavius Valerius Constantinus.

[18] Eusebius *Life of Constantine*, Book III, 26–28.

[19] Eusebius *Life of Constantine*, Book III, 33.

[20] Eusebius *Life of Constantine*, Book III, 34–39.

[21] Eusebius *Life of Constantine*, Book III, 54.

[22] Eusebius *Life of Constantine*, Book III, 54.

[23] Zechariah, a minor old testament prophet whose eschatological themes and provide many images of a messianic figure that were borrowed by New Testament writers and applied to the figure of Jesus.

[24] The *Anonymous Pilgrim of Bordeaux, Early Christian Pilgrimage* (www.christusrex.org http://orion.it.luc.edu/~avande1/jerusalem/sources/bordeauxJerus.htm, accessed March 10, 2012).

[25] *Jerome on Zophaniah* I, 15–16, in Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 145.

[26] Latin Julianus Apostata, born 331/332 CE in Constantinople; original name Flavius Claudius, by name Julian the Apostate.

[27] Socrates Scholasticus (380 CE–450 CE). Church historian whose *Ecclesiastical Histories* is the authoritative documentary source for Christian history of the fourth and fifth centuries.

[28] *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. II Book III, C 20. Christian Classics Ethereal Library: Wheaton College: www.reformedreader.org/history/ecfcollection.htm (accessed March 10, 2012).

[29] Salaminius Hermias Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical Histories*, Book 5. In Jacob Marcus (1990), *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Sourcebook, 315–1791*. New York: Hebrew Union College Press.

[30] Born April 10, 401, Constantinople, died July 28, 450.

[31] An imperial edict was issued in 423 explicitly forbidding an action that would destroy a synagogue.

[32] Letter to the Presbyter Faustus by Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons: Translated by Arnold vander Nat, 2003 homepages.luc.edu/~avande1/jerusalem/sources/eucherius.htm (accessed March 10, 2012).

[33] Theodore the Studite writes “Every artificial image exhibits in itself, by way of imitation, the form of its model; the model is the image the one in the other.”

[34] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 145.

[35] Holy Sepulcher began to collect the most precious relics including the horn that held the oil in anointing the heads of David and Solomon.

[36] Karen Armstrong (1996), *Jerusalem One City Three Faiths*, p. 293. New York: Ballantine Books.

[37] Ruled 483–565.

[38] Procopius, *History of the Wars*, II: 22–33. Translated by H. B. Dewing. Cambridge, MA: Loeb Library of the Greek and Roman Classics, Harvard

University Press.

[39] A death toll of a million and higher. Although the historical record lacks any evidence of the death toll, there is circumstantial evidence, such as inscriptions on buildings suddenly ending in the mid-sixth century in some parts of Syria.

[40] Alain J. Stoclet (2006), " *Consilia humana, ops divina, superstitio:* Seeking succor and solace in times of plague, with particular reference to Gaul in the early Middle Ages," in Lester K. Little (ed.) *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*. Cambridge University Press.

[41] Moving overland to Italy, France, and Spain, and touching Britain and Ireland.

[42] Marjolein Schat, "Justinian's foreign policy and the Plague" http://entomology.montana.edu/historybug/YersiniaEssays/Schat.htm (accessed March 10, 2012).

[43] J. B. Bury (1923) *History of the Late Roman Empire*. London: Macmillan.

[44] David Womersley, ed. (2005), Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, V II, C XLV. New York: Penguin Books.

[45] Gregory the Great, reigned 590–604, theologian and administrative, social, liturgical, and moral reformer, laid down he idea of a Christian society that would define medieval culture.

[46] Richard Krautheimer (2000), *Rome: Profile of a City, 312–1308*, p. 62, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press. (Also in Gibbon *Decline and Fall* V II, C XLV.)

[47] In the east, the great cultures such as India and China, though not free from internal conflict, never a suffered a disjuncture as total as this.

[48] Burnt to the ground during the Nika Revolt against Justinian in 532.

[49] In 558 an earthquake collapsed part of the dome, and there was further collapse during repairs. Reconstruction was entrusted to Isidorus the Younger, and he created a steeper dome in lighter materials. The church was rededicated in 563.

[50] *De Aedificiis Procopius*, extract from W. R. Lethaby and Harold Swainson (1894), *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople: A Study of*

Byzantine Building. London: Macmillan. www.archive.org/details/churchsanctasop01swaigoog (accessed March 10, 2012).

[51] See note 50 above.

[52] Paul the Silentiary extract from Lethaby and Swainson, *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople*.

[53] This disappeared in the seventh century, possibly destroyed by earthquake.

[54] Son of the warrior king Khosrow who greatly enlarged the Persian Empire.

[55] Under the General Shr Baraga.

[56] F. Conybeare (1910), "Antiochus Srategos, Account of the Sack of Jerusalem 614," *English Historical Review*, 1910. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 171.

[57] The principal source for this account was Theophanes, a monk writing 200 years after the events described and far from objective. As the events had come down to him they recorded that over 90,000 Christians had died in the assault, more than the population of Rome at the time. It is recorded there was negotiation with the Persians to allow the slaughter of their Christian prisoners who had been held outside the city.

[58] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 173.

[59] The exhaustion came not only from war but from bubonic plague (see above notes 39 and 40).

[60] His youngest son and heir, Mardnshh, was murdered before his eyes.

[61] There is a mystery related to the arrangements of this procession. Did Heraclites have a gate specially built the eastern wall of Temple Mount to glorify the arrival of the True Cross; the gate today known as the Golden Gate? The architectural evidence suggests that this great double entrance was constructed at around this time, and such a splendid entrance must have been a prelude to an equally splendid destination. If so what would justify a Christian Emperor constructing a grand entry on to Temple Mount; a place that Christ prophesied would be forever abandoned? One possibility is that during the three years of Jewish administration there was construction, and this gate alone survived the return to Christian rule.

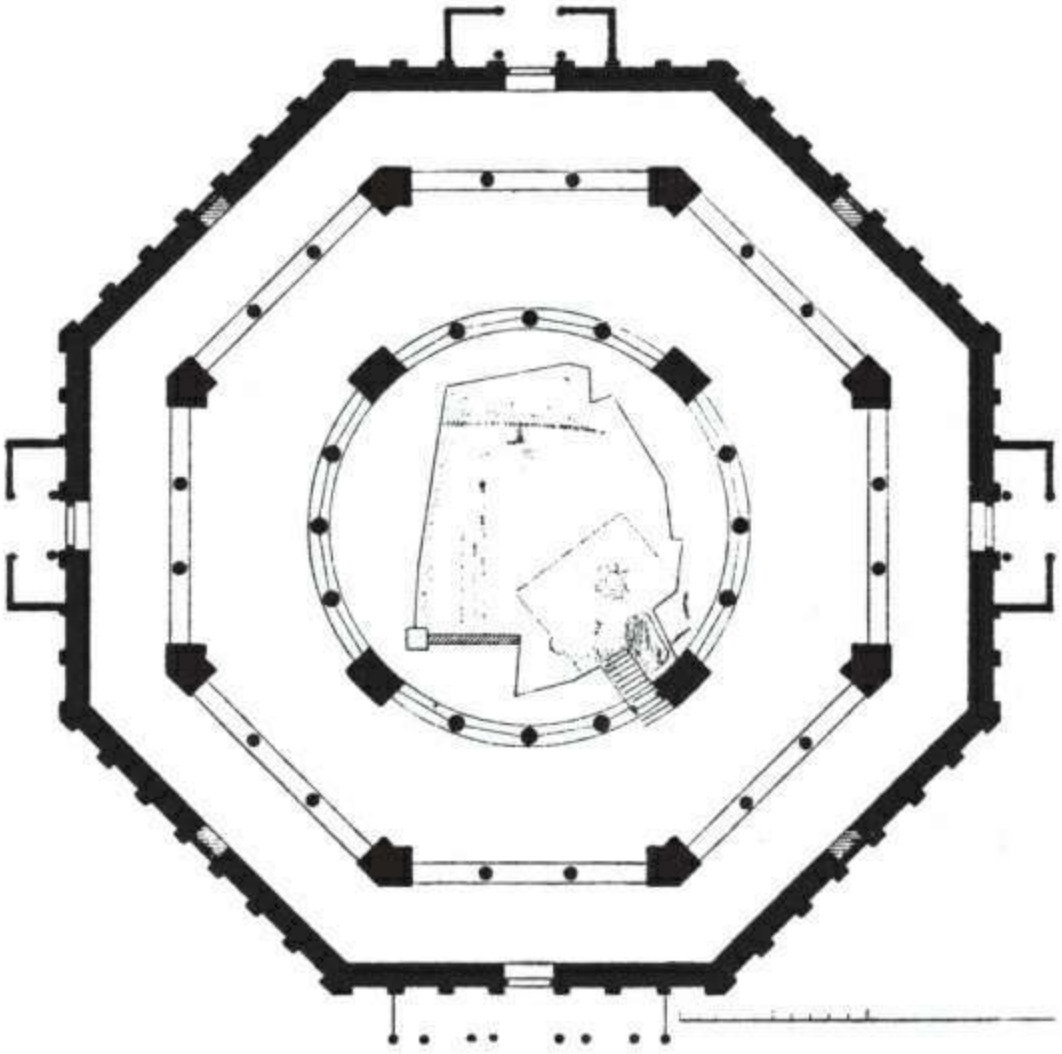
Chapter 5

Dome of the Rock

> At the dawn, when the light of the sun first strikes the dome and the drum catches the rays, then is this edifice a marvelous sight to behold, and one such that in all of Islam I have not seen the equal; neither have I heard tell of anything built in pagan times that could rival in grace this Dome of the Rock[1]

Late in the summer of the Christian year 688, 56 years after the death of the prophet Muhammad, a small group of men gathered on the highest point of Temple Mount, the Noble Sanctuary, *al-Haram al-Sharif*, as the Islamic rulers of the city had named it. They carried with them the surveying tools and ropes they would use to lay out on the bare rock ledges the form of a circle within an octagon (Figure 5.1). This figure would be centered on the place where the rocks folded to form a cave large enough to enter. It was the ground plan for a new building, and, long before the marks were made, much thought had been given to determining the form it should take and why. Though it was consciously formed to duplicate the dimensions of the Anastasis, the dome and the rotunda behind the Church of the Holy Sepulcher built over the rock-cut chamber which the Christian faithful believed to be the tomb of Christ, and though it would utilize the craftsmen and skills that Islam inherited in the occupation of Byzantine Syria, the building that resulted—the Dome of the Rock—was a wholly original product of this new religion. The Dome of the Rock was the first work of Islamic architecture.[2]

Figure 5.1 Dome of the Rock: Plan. From Georg Dehio and Gustav von Bezold: *Kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*. Stuttgart, 1887–1901



2. JERUSALEM: DER FELSENDOM.

It was also formed with a keen awareness of the way in which the physical presence of Hagia Sophia had centered the Christian world.

The Qur'an, from the Arabic “Recitation,” the sacred text of Islam, comprises 114 books called *Sura*. In Sura 17 the voice of the Prophet speaks of Jewish history and the fate of the Temples of Solomon:

> And We had made known to the children of Israel in the Book: Most certainly you will make mischief in the land twice, and most certainly you will behave insolently with great insolence.
>
> So when the promise for the first of the two came, We sent over you Our servants, of mighty prowess, so they went to and fro among the houses,

and it was a promise to be accomplished.

Then We gave you back the turn to prevail against them, and aided you with wealth and children and made you a numerous band.

If you do good, you will do good for your own souls, and if you do evil, it shall be for them. So when the second promise came (We raised another people) that they may bring you to grief and that they may enter the mosque as they entered it the first time, and that they might destroy whatever they gained ascendancy over with utter destruction.[3]

"As they entered it the first time" refers to the destruction of the first Temple of Solomon, which was overcome by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. Here Muhammad was citing the direct involvement of the Islamic peoples in the millennial struggles of the Jews. Islam—literally to surrender to God—was, for Muhammad, a quality that marked all the believers in the religions of the book: Jew, Christian, and Muslim alike. Ibrahim (Abraham) was the first Muslim; the first to demonstrate the meaning of complete surrender by his willingness to sacrifice his son if God had wished it. The tribes of Arabia believed they were as blessed as the Jews; both were the Children of Abraham, the Arabs the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, child of the union with his servant Hagar.[4]

Muhammad had been led to religion through his disgust with the greed and faithlessness of his fellow merchants in Mecca. According to the *Life of the Prophet*,[5] he began to feel he was under divine guidance in 610 CE. He first preached in public in 613 and over the years attracted a dedicated community of followers. He also attracted fierce resistance because of his persistent attack on the lingering polytheism within the religious traditions of his people. In 622, hostility from the leading families in Mecca led Muhammad to flee with his most dedicated followers to Medina, 200 miles to the north. This journey was the *Hegira*, or migration, and marks the inception of Islam: 622 CE is year one in the Islamic calendar.

In the months after the migration, Muhammad followed Jewish tradition and faced Jerusalem as he prayed, facing the memory of Solomon's Temple. Then a dawning awareness of the distinction of his teaching caused him to turn his back on that city and make Mecca, and its ancient sacred shrine the *Ka'ba*, the direction in which prayer should be made: this is the *qiblah* in

Arabic. It is explained in the Qur'an:

> The fools among the people will say: What has turned them from their qiblah, which they had? Say: The East and the West belong only to Allah; He guides whom He likes to the right path.
>
> And thus We have made you a medium [just] nation that you may be the bearers of witness to the people and [that] the Apostle may be a bearer of witness to you; and We did not make that which you would have to be the qiblah but that We might distinguish him who follows the Apostle from him who turns back upon his heels, and this was surely hard except for those whom Allah has guided aright; and Allah was not going to make your faith to be fruitless; most surely Allah is Affectionate, Merciful to the people.
>
> Indeed We see the turning of your face to heaven, so We shall surely turn you to a qiblah which you shall like; turn then your face towards the Sacred Mosque, and wherever you are, turn your face towards it, and those who have been given the Book most surely know that it is the truth from their Lord; and Allah is not at all heedless of what they do.[6]

The Sacred Mosque is the Ka'ba,[7] and Sura 2: 145 is explicit “And even if you bring to those who have been given the Book every sign they would not follow your qiblah, nor can you be a follower of their qiblah, neither are they the followers of each other's qiblah, and if you follow their desires after the knowledge that has come to you, then you shall most surely be among the unjust.” Despite having been given ample evidence of his prophetic mission, the Jews in Arabia had refused to follow Muhammad.

Later commentaries on the Qur'an acknowledge Muhammad's initial wish to draw the Jews to his teaching, but offered different explanations. In one, it was the memory of the “Holy House,” the Temple of Solomon, that had caused him at first to direct prayer to Jerusalem: one Al-Rabi ibn Anas relates, on the authority of Abu al-Aliya:

> the prophet of God was given his choice of turning his face in whatever direction he wished. He chose the Holy House [Temple of Mount] in Jerusalem in order that People of the Book would be conciliated. This was qibla [sic] for sixteen months; all the while, however, he was turning his face towards the heavens until God turned him towards the house.[8]

Another commentary asserted that Muhammad's attention to Jerusalem was explicitly to draw Jews to his teaching:

> It is related, on the other hand, on the authority of Ibn Abbas: When the Apostle of God migrated to Medina most of whose inhabitants were Jews, God commanded him to face Jerusalem, and the Jews were glad. The Prophet faced it for some time beyond ten months, but he loved the qibla [sic] of Abraham [the Ka'ba]. Thus he used to pray to God and gaze into the heavens until God sent down [the verse] “We have seen you turning your face toward heaven.”
>
> The Jews became suspicious and said, “What has turned them from their qibla, toward which they formerly prayed?” Thus God sent down (the verse) “Say, to God belongs the east and the west….[9]

And there were Jewish converts within the communities around Medina, but mostly there was open hostility between the Jews and the followers of Muhammad, who were known to be capable of violence. Despite this, the message in the Qur'an is clear:

> And do not dispute with the followers of the Book except by what is best, except those of them who act unjustly, and say: We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you, and our God and your God is One, and to Him do we submit.[10]

Most commentaries on the emergence of Islam take issue with the lack of evidence of a developed artistic culture within Arabia.[11] The tribes are portrayed as semi-nomadic, residing in a land of deserts and oases; primitive in contrast to the grandly Hellenized cities of Syria to the north. Historians rely so much on cultural artifacts—a conscious architecture, an evolved literature—to provide a path into the character of a people that the absence of any such material surrounding the birth of Islam gives the Qur'an a disembodied authority. Mecca, however, was far from being remote from the affairs of the world, though its worldview was profoundly different from that found anywhere else within the Byzantine sphere of influence. Its culture and economy had developed out of its position on a centuries-old trade route linking the Mediterranean with India and the Far East. The trade was in spices. For a millennium, Arab fleets had been carried by the westerly winds to the Malabar Coast of India then to what is now Karalla, and on to Sri

Lanka. The ships returning on the northeasterly “trade winds” sailed into the ports of Aden and Cana on the southern coast of Arabia, carrying spices: cinnamon, cassia, cardamom, ginger, and turmeric, and other precious goods drawn from across southern Asia. The journey was managed by a succession of closely held trading monopolies protected by deception and myth. The cassia spice, it was claimed, grew in shallow lakes guarded by winged animals, and cinnamon was only found in deep glens infested with poisonous snakes.[12, 13, 14]

These precious cargoes would arrive into a confusion of ships unloading at the Arabian ports. The merchants would begin to bargain with the ships' masters on the quality of the goods, and share information on the state of nations in India and beyond; unrest could be bad for trade. Once bought, the bundled spices would be loaded on to the backs of hundreds of camels for the journey north. From the coast the journey was by Sana in Yemen, to Mecca, where many of the major trading families lived. From there the passage led to the oases of Medina and Philadelphia (now Amman), then across the desert and through the mountains to Petra, into Syria, and Busra al-Sham, all splendid Hellenized cities.[15] After Busra al-Sham the path would divide: east to Damascus or west to the coast at Gaza and from there across the Mediterranean. This was journey of a thousand and more miles; a routine yet complex passage fraught with uncertainty, taking many months and involving hundreds of people. It was a passage on which the economy of Arabia depended. As key agents in this process, the merchants of Mecca would have had as keen a sense of the politics of Southern India and maybe China as they would of Byzantium.

Mecca was a major stop on the passage north; goods here may have been transferred to new agents.[16] According to the *Life of the Prophet* it was north to Busra al-Sham, a meeting point of the caravan routes, that Muhammad traveled with his uncle at the age of 12.[17] And here, even as late as the seventh century, Muhammad would have experienced the character and the ways of life of a Hellenized culture. Excavations over the last century have recovered enough to convey the strength of its architecture and the strangeness of a town all built in black basalt. The great theater survives intact,[18] as does the market square where the caravans unloaded their cargoes.[19] The Byzantine cathedral, dedicated to Syrian martyrs SS. Sergius,

Bacchus, and Leontus was built in 512–513. Its vast dome, long since collapsed, spanned 36 meters, greater than the dome of Hagia Sophia built 25 years later. The cathedral was 80 years old when Muhammad first came to the city, and it was within its walls that tradition has the 12-year-old meeting the Christian priest Bahira. He had sought the boy out and questioned him closely on religious matters, and from this exchange the priest predicted, “This is the master of all humans. Allah will send him with a Message which will be a mercy to all beings…. I can recognize him also by the seal of Prophethood, which is below his shoulder, like an apple. We have got to learn this from our books.”[20] When he was 25 years old, Muhammad made this journey again on a commission to manage the passage of goods for a successful businesswoman Khadija, who would later become his wife. He may have made such a journey many times and on each occasion he would have passed close to Jerusalem—less than a day's passage; close enough to attract someone who had heard of the divine power of the Holy House, the lost Temple of Solomon.

Muhammad and the Fall of Jerusalem

It was in 610, the year Persian armies invaded the eastern lands of Byzantium, that Muhammad began to preach.[21] In Sura 30 of the Qur'an, he hailed the initial loss of Rum (Byzantine) Syria, to the Persians in 614:

> The Romans are vanquished,
>
> In a near land, and they, after being vanquished, shall overcome.[22]

He then prophesied that the Romans would recover only to fall to Islam: “Within a few years. Allah's is the command before and after; and on that day the believers shall rejoice.”[23] Such total war between such powerful nations, which was waged to the very borders of Arabia, must have been of great interest to Muhammad. So also would have been the resultant damage to the military strength and the economies of both Persia and Byzantium. He certainly would have known how the conflict had weakened the border defenses between Arabia and Syria.

In his sixtieth year, the unchallenged spiritual and political leader of the tribes of Arabia, Muhammad led an army of 30,000 to the borders of Syria, seizing the mainly Christian cities and the regions around them. In taking control, he offered generous treaties that protected the rights of the conquered and, in so doing, established a tactical procedure for conquest that would guide all who would come after him.

The Qur'an called on the followers of the Prophet to conquer the world by faith, not force; yet Muhammad's death in 632 CE initiated a military campaign which in the following decades spread Islam and established Islamic administrations across all of Eastern Byzantium and beyond.

Umar in Jerusalem

In 637 the forces of second Caliph, Umar, Companion of the Prophet, arrived at the gates of Jerusalem after taking Damascus. It was Christmas, and the siege blocked the path to Bethlehem and the “Cradle of Jesus.” The sermon given by the patriarch of Jerusalem Sophronius, in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, has survived intact:

> For now the slime of the godless Saracens, like the gentiles at the time, has captured Bethlehem and does not yield the passage but threatens slaughter and destruction if we leave this Holy City and if we dare to approach our beloved and sacred Bethlehem.
>
> Therefore I call on and I command and I beg you for the love of Christ the Lord, in so far as it is in our power, let us correct ourselves, let us shine forth with repentance, let us be purified with conversion and let us curb our performance of acts which are hateful to God. If we constrain ourselves, as friendly and beloved of God, we would laugh at the fall of our Saracen adversaries and we would view their not distant death and we would see their final destruction. For their blood-loving blade will enter their hearts, their bows will be shattered and their shafts will be fixed in them. They will furnish a clear way for us having neither hills nor thorns nor impassable points so that we, running boldly and dauntlessly, may prostrate ourselves before the Holy Manger.[24]

Again, there is the sense that in a godly ordained world, adversity is the

punishment for sin. In calling the attackers “the slime of the godless Saracens” could the patriarch have been unaware that these forces were united by a new religion?

Contrary to Sophronius' forebodings, the Arab commanders took the city without blood being shed, and sometime thereafter[25] Caliph Umar “entered the Holy City in camelhair garments all soiled and torn, and making a show of piety as a cloak for his diabolical hypocrisy.”[26] So wrote the Christian Theophanes early in ninth century. Far from hypocrisy, this show of piety was reflected in Umar's first official act; he formed a treaty between the invaders and the Christian population:[27]

> In the name of God, the Merciful Benefactor! This is the guarantee granted the inhabitants of Aelia by the servant of God Umar, Commander of the Believers. He grants them the surety of their persons, their goods, their churches, their crosses—whether these are in a good or a bad condition—and the cult in general.
>
> Their churches will not be expropriated for residences nor destroyed; they and their annexes will suffer no harm and the same will be true of their crosses and their goods. No constraint will be imposed upon them in the matter of religion and no one of them will be annoyed. No Jew will be authorized to live in Jerusalem with them. The inhabitants of Jerusalem will pay the poll-tax in the same manner as those in other cities. It will be left to them to expel from their city the Byzantines (*Rum*) and the brigands. Those of the latter who leave will have safe-conduct. Those who wish to stay will be authorized to do so, on condition of paying the same poll-tax as the residents of Aelia. Those among the inhabitants of Aelia who wish to leave with the Byzantines, take with them their goods, leave behind their churches and their crosses, will likewise have a safe-conduct for themselves, their churches, and their crosses…[28]

This is the so-called Covenant of Umar and it appears in one of its fullest forms in a text by the tenth-century Muslim historian Tabari.[29] Jerusalem was referred to by its Roman name Aelia, and the covenant guaranteed generous protection to the Christian population, promising safe passage to those who wished to leave. The document was remarkable for the repeated commitment to safeguard the symbol of the Christian Cross. In a last desperate act, the

Byzantine forces had managed to get the True Cross out of the city and back to Constantinople. The decree that no Jew would be allowed to live in the city was premature. Jews were a sizable population in Syria and influential in business: three years after conquest Umar granted them the right to resettle. However, he gave the Christian patriarch control over the numbers that would be admitted.

Some time after concluding the treaty, the Caliph asked to be taken to what he called the "Sanctuary of David":[30]

> Umar, as soon as he was at leisure from the writing of the Treaty of Capitulation made between him and the people of the Holy City, said to (Sophronius) the patriarch of Jerusalem: "Take us to the sanctuary of David." And the patriarch agreed to do so. Then Umar went forth girt with a sword and with four thousand of the Companions of the Prophet who had come to Jerusalem with him, all likewise wearing swords, and a crowd of us Arabs who had come up to the Holy City followed them, none of us bearing any weapons except our swords. And the patriarch walked before Umar among the Companions, and we came behind the caliph.
>
> Thus we entered the Holy City.
>
> And the patriarch took us to the church which is called the *Kumamah*[31] and he said: "This is David's sanctuary." Umar looked around and pondered, and then he answered the patriarch: "You are lying, for the Apostle [Muhammad] described to me the Sanctuary of David and this is not it." Then the patriarch went with us to the Church of Sion and again he said: "This is the Sanctuary of David." But the caliph replied to him: "You are lying." So the patriarch went on till he came to the Noble Sanctuary of the Holy City [Temple Mount] and reached the gate later called the Gate of Muhammad.
>
> Now the dung which was then all about the Noble Sanctuary had settled on the steps of this gate so that it even came out into the street in which the gate opened, and it had accumulated so greatly on the steps as to reach almost up to the ceiling of the gateway. The patriarch said to Umar: "It is impossible to go on further and enter, except crawling on one's hands and knees." So the patriarch went down on hands and knees,

> preceding Umar and we all crawled after him, until he had brought us out in the court of the Noble Sanctuary of the Holy City. Then we arose from our knees and stood upright. Umar looked around him, pondering for a long time. Then he said: “By Him in whose hands is my soul [sic], this is the place described to us by the Apostle of God.”[32]

Emphasizing the filth that had gathered over the centuries must have been intended as an indictment of the Christians. The most surprising note, however, is the indication that Umar was on a mission for the Prophet: “the Apostle [Muhammad] described to me the Sanctuary of David and this is not it.” It will never be known from whence Muhammad could gain such a clear sense of the place he may not have visited.

There are many versions of Umar's recovery of Temple Mount.They vary in the detail, but these details are revealing.[33] The following is from the Christian historian Eutychius, writing in 876. Umar does not ask to see David's Sanctuary but says to the patriarch “Give me a place in which I might build a place of worship.”

> The Patriarch said to him: “I will give to the Commander of the Faithful the spot to build a place of worship where the Kings of Rome were unable to build one.
>
> They were Romans when they embraced the Christian religion and Helena, the mother of Constantine, built the churches of Jerusalem. The place of the rock and the area around it were deserted ruins by then and they poured dirt over the rock so that great was the filth above it. The Byzantines, however, neglected it and did not hold it in veneration, nor did they build a church over it because Christ our Lord said in his Holy Gospel ‘not a stone will be left on the stone which will not be ruined and devastated.’ And for this reason the Christians left it as a ruin and did not build a church over it.”

Though written by a Christian about an Islamic invader, it illustrates the persistent presence of Christ's prophecy six centuries later. The text continues:

> So Sophronius took Umar by the hand and stood him over the filth. Umar taking hold of his cloak filled it with dirt and threw it into the Valley of Gehenna. When the Muslims saw Umar carrying dirt with his own hands,

> they all immediately began carrying dirt in their cloaks and shields and what have you until the whole place as cleansed and the rock was revealed. Then they all said: “Let us build a sanctuary and let us place a stone in his heart.” “No, “Umar responded “we will build a sanctuary and place a stone at the end of the sanctuary.” Therefore Umar built a sanctuary and put the stone at the end of it.[34]

Some understanding of why Umar did not build in the center of the Noble Sanctuary is explained in a text from the fourteenth century, based on much earlier material. It introduces *Ka'b*, a Jew who converted to Islam in the first caliphate. He was a scholar on the histories of the prophets in the court of the second caliph.[35] The text records Umar looking for a specific rock, a proposition mentioned nowhere else, and determining where to build a sanctuary on Temple Mount and place the qiblah marking the direction of Mecca:

> Then the caliph himself went there [to Jerusalem], and Ka'b [al-Ahbar] with him. Umar said to Ka'b: “O Abu lshaq, do you know the position of the Rock?” Ka'b answered: “Measure from the well which is in the Valley of Gehenna so and so many ells; there dig and you will discover it,” adding, “at this present day it is a dung-heap.” So they dug there and the rock was laid bare. Then Umar said to Ka'b: “Where do you say we should place the sanctuary, or rather, the qibla [sic]?” Ka'b replied: “Lay out a place for it behind [that is, to the north of] the Rock and so ‘you will make two qiblas, that, namely of Moses and that of Muhammad.’” And Umar answered him: “You still lean toward the Jews, Abu Ishaq. The sanctuary will be in front [that is, to the south of] the Rock.” Thus was the Mosque (al-Aqsa) erected in the front part of the Haram area.[36]

Al-Aqsa Mosque, the “furthest mosque”[37] now refers to the great hall at the southern edge of Herod's great platform, but for most of its existence it indicated the entire southern platform used for prayer; this area was and remains the third holiest place in Islam. And the qiblah set up at the southern end was placed facing Mecca; would be free from any metaphysical presence emanating from the site of Solomon's Temple. However, a later caliph would take possession of what he believed was the qiblah of Moses. The sole contemporary account of the mosque that Umar built comes from the Christian priest and traveler Arculf. On his return from a pilgrimage to the

Holy Land around the year 680, Arculf was driven by storm to the coast of Scotland and so arrived at the monastery on the island of Iona, where he related his adventures to the abbot, St. Adamnan, who published them in *De locis Sanctis*:[38]

> Moreover, in that renowned place where once had been the magnificently constructed Temple, placed in the vicinity of the wall from the east, at this time, the Saracens fabricated in a crude manner a quadrangular house of prayer, constructing it with raised planks and great beams on top of certain remains of ruins; this they frequent; and this house is able to hold, it is said, three thousand men at the same time.[39]

It was formed to allow the 3,000 Muslims in the city to come together for Friday prayers. As Umar laid bare the surface of the sanctuary there was no mention of ruined structures. Be that as it may, there were enough ruins elsewhere in the city to provide the material for a house of prayer.

Both Jewish and Muslim sources recorded that there was strong Jewish participation in the reclamation of Temple Mount:

> It was God's will that we found favor with the Ishmaelite rulers. At the time of their invasion and conquest of Palestine from the Edomites, the Arabs came to Jerusalem and some Jews showed them the location of the Temple. This group of Jews has lived among them ever since. The Jews agree to keep the site clear of refuse, in return for which they were granted the privilege of praying at its gates.[40]

In a text from the years immediately following the invasion, a rabbi hailed the Islamic conquest as liberation for the Jews: “And Israel will be freed of all their sins. And will no more be kept far from the house of prayer.”[41] Perhaps a not-so-surprising expression of hope, given the bitter conflict with the Christians in the decades preceding the invasion.

Umar was assassinated in 644, and this led to four decades of war and dispute over who was authorized to give leadership to Islam. Umar was succeeded by Uthman, also one of the companions of the Prophet, and a member of the Umayyad clan. In 656, he was killed by followers of Ali ibn Abi Talib,[42] son-in-law of Muhammad, who was then named caliph. This assassination would divide Islam henceforth between those who believed that leadership must come from the direct descendents of Muhammad—the *Shi'a*–

and those who recognized the first caliphs as all Muhammad's rightful successors—the *Sunni*. In 661 the Shi'a Ali was defeated and killed by the Sunni Mu'awiyah, fifth caliph and founder of the Umayyad dynasty. He ruled from 661 to 680, and brought unity to what had become, after 30 years of spreading conquest, a vast Islamic empire. In the east it stretched across Iran and northeastern Afghanistan to the mountains of Kurastan and in the west through Egypt and across North Africa.

For Mu'awiyah, Jerusalem had an importance far beyond any of his predecessors. Archeology has uncovered extensive remains of a palace complex below the southern wall of Temple Mount that dates from his years in power, 661–680. His deep feelings for the Noble Sanctuary survive in a collection of prophetic phrases from the lessons he preached in Umar's al-Aqsa Mosque. They speak of that place “where people will gather and arise on the day of judgment; as the chosen land of Allah to which he lead the best of his servants,” and most extravagantly: “God loves the area between the two walls of this Mosque more than any other place in the world.”[43]

In 680 Mu'awiyah named his son Yazed, a Sunni, caliph. In reaction a Shi'a army led by the son of Ali ibn Abi Talib attacked, only to be defeated and slaughtered in Karbala; henceforth, Karbala[44] would be the holy city of the Shi'a. Yazed died in 684 and Umayyad Abd al-Malik was named caliph and ruled until to 705. He was a gracious leader who expanded the empire and made it more secure and prosperous, but his most lasting achievement was to build the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount, the Noble Sanctuary in Jerusalem.

The Dome of the Rock

Nowhere in the culture of the peoples of southern Arabia or in the emerging rituals and performance of the new religion, was there any apparent demand for a monument. The mosque in Medina had been shaped to maintain the memory of the home of Muhammad; it was an unadorned columned hall facing an equally unadorned courtyard around which lived the wives of the Prophet. It was of sufficient scale to hold the community of the faithful. This simplicity can still be seen in the mosque in Busra al-Sham, constructed soon

after the death of the prophet. Presumably it was this simplicity that led the pilgrim Arculf to describe the first al-Aqsa Mosque as crude. In their modesty these early mosques can hardly be seen as consciously formed architecture. The Dome of the Rock however, is in total contrast. It is a powerful and confident demonstration of the triumph of Islam, which arrived, fully formed, seemingly from nowhere. This is the first great work of Islamic architecture.

Arabia spanned many regions and different peoples, and on coming to power Malik faced opposition in every direction from the tribes in the north, the Iraqis in the west and most dangerously the Shi'a armies of the anti-caliph in the south. Step by step his generals tackled each enemy as was opportune, first by bringing the northern tribes to submission then in 691, defeating an Iraqi force weakened by internal fighting, leaving the anti-caliph Abdulla ibn Zubayr in Mecca, as his final foe. Malik's forces besieged and bombarded Mecca. Then, along with many Christians, they invaded the city, gutting the Ka'ba, setting it on fire and causing vast damage. They fractured the sacred Black Stone that was kept in the inner sanctum; this was an ancient meteorite, a gift from heaven. Malik's violation of Islam's most holy place would be long remembered and would affect the way his enemies would later view his rule.

In September of 692, with Mecca in his possession, the Shi'a caliph dead and the Ka'ba in ruins, Malik returned to Jerusalem to complete the Dome of the Rock. Construction had begun in 688, and documents survive naming Sa'id the Good, Raja'b. Hayawa, Yazid b. Salam, and his son Bahia b.Yazid[45] as governing the construction. The last two, father and son, are thought to have been Christians. Such was Abd al Malik's belief in the far-reaching significance of this work that before building he sought approval from leaders in all lands under Muslim control. Once approved, a full-size model of the proposed structure was erected on Temple Mount to ensure complete understanding of Malik's vision for the building. Builders and craftsmen were brought to Jerusalem not only from the lands under Islam, but also from Byzantium. The skills of Syrian builders must have heightened the ambition of the project. From the glory days of the Roman Empire and Herod, through the Christian years, Syria had maintained one of the strongest and most creative architectural cultures outside of Rome, and the major architectural elements that form the Dome of the Rock, the timber framing of the dome,

the arches, and reuse of antique columns (termed *spolia)*, were all formed within the Byzantine Syrian tradition.

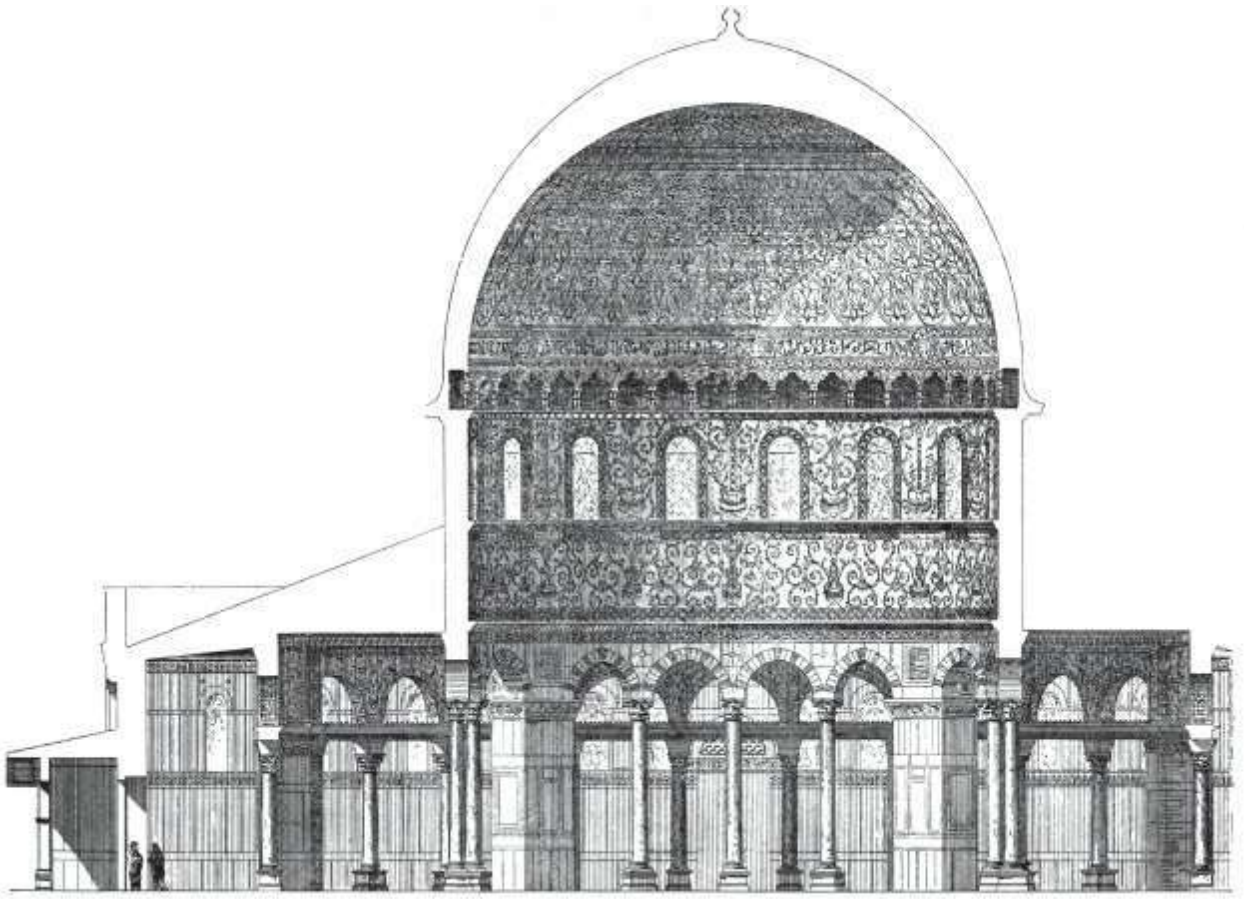
Several elements came together to form the Dome. It was explicitly a physical manifestation of the singular nature of this God, in contrast to the confusing Christian position of God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, resolving the divine nature of Christ, agreed to at the Council of Nicaea in 325. It was conceived by those who had seen or at least knew of the power of Hagia Sophia, which also has a distinct singularity of form, a reflection of the Monophysite view—God in one person—held by some in Justinian's court. It covered the highest point on Mount Moriah, close to what had been remembered as the “holy of holies” in the temples of the Jews. The dome and the cylinder on which it sat replicated almost exactly the dome over the high altar of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher: the span of the dome and the height from the ground to the springing of the arch were both in the order of 20.44 meters (67 feet). Though not in the Qur'an, Islamic tradition held that there were eight paths into paradise hence the third element, an octagonal plan which held eight gates to the divine path. The most mysterious element was the cave that still folds into the rock beneath it. There are several elusive references to such a rock in texts from the third century onwards, beginning with the “pierced stone” mentioned by the Pilgrim of Bordeaux. There was passing reference to a “rock” by the guide who led Umar to rediscover Temple Mount. When allowed, Jews did gather annually on Temple Mount to mark the day of the destruction, the Ninth of Ab, and must have erected an altar where they believed the sanctuary had stood.

A treatise in a Mishna from the second century, on the divine service for Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement tells of an ancient stone: “After the Ark was taken away, a stone remained there from the time of the early prophets; it was called ‘the foundation.’[46] It was higher than the ground by three fingerbreadths.” Within this tradition, the Ark of the Covenant would have sat upon this rock, the highest point on Mount Moriah; the “Stone of the Foundation” *Aben Shetiyah* in Hebrew. Yet nothing connects either a Jewish altar or the “Stone of the Foundation” with the cave beneath the Dome. This fold in the rock, evidently a natural cave, could have been a product of the force with which Caliph Umar stripped and cleansed the surface of Temple Mount. His rigor may have uncovered a more ancient mystery.

There have been alterations small and large over the centuries, yet the Dome's dominance over the old city of Jerusalem remains essentially unchanged. On the outside, only the marble at the base of the octagon is original. The tiles which long ago replaced the mosaic that once covered the exterior have themselves been many times replaced. It is pleasing to imagine how it once appeared, to see the walls beneath the dome covered with the same glowing mosaic of natural forms that saturate the interior. Hidden behind a continuous inscription from the Qur'an that runs around the parapet at the edge of the octagon is a stone balustrade of small columns and arches. This, in a distinctly Islamic manner, was suppressed so as not to detract from the words of the Prophet. The walls became as pages in a book. The elaborate structure below the surface has suggested to some a pre-Islamic existence for the building, but rather it is the assertion of Islamic forms over the building conventions of Byzantine Syria.

In the interior, the drum of the dome sits on a base of reused Roman and Byzantine columns—a cross remains carved into one capital—which alternate with massive, marble-clad piers. The combination of the alternating dark and light marble covering the arches of the double ambulatory, create an energetic and harmonious composition. Gold mosaic is everywhere above and brilliant in effect. Beneath the dome, depictions of vases and cornucopia, formed in glass mosaic and mother of pearl, rise above the capitals and piers, sitting within a bed of intertwined stylized plants, which swarm up to envelope the dome (Figure 5.2, Plate 16).

Figure 5.2 Dome of the Rock: Section showing mosaic decoration on the interior. From Georg Dehio and Gustav von Bezold: *Kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*. Stuttgart, 1887–1901



3. JERUSALEM: DER FELSENDOM.

Over the centuries the dome has suffered a few collapses, bringing the mosaic down with it. However, in the upper walls and coffers of the ambulatories the decoration has survived almost as Malik would have seen it. Here, the vases and cornucopia of the central volume are repeated, but they share the wall with figures that at first sight are curious and strange. In contrast to the glass and mother of pearl that enrich the other figures, these are encrusted with precious stones. One pattern closely resembles the crown in the mosaic portrait of Empress Theodora in Ravenna, and this clue helps deduce that they are representations of crowns and bracelets, breast plates, earrings and necklaces; all the regalia and jewelry of the emperors and empresses of Byzantine and Persian courts and also the adornment of saints: there is even a trace of the Virgin.

A scholar's interpretation[47] of the more elusive figures in these mosaics proposes that they are the exact equivalent of the collection of trophies held within the cube of the Ka'ba. Whereas the objects in the Ka'ba were real—

jewelry, lamps, precious objects of veneration from the leading clans of Islam (Malik himself is known to have contributed two necklaces to the collection, after he both destroyed and restored it)—the figures on the walls of the Dome are abstractions. They symbolize Islam's possession of the wealth of Byzantium and Persia: their subjugation to the one true faith. As such they would have been understandable to pilgrims of all faiths.[48]

In the inner face of the innermost ambulatory, above these evocative figures, is a text in mosaic[49] from the Qur'an chosen to compliment the symbolism of the building. It forcibly carries the message that Malik built the Dome to convey. It is a continuous sequence[50] and there is much repetition, but these extracts are explicit: beginning on the South East [SE] inner face of the Octagonal Arcade:

> People of the Book! Do not exaggerate in your religion [E] nor utter aught concerning God save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a Messenger of God, and His Word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His messengers, and say not “Three”—Cease! (it is) [NE] better for you!—God is only One God. Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And God is sufficient as Defender. The Messiah will never scorn to be a [N] servant unto God, nor will the favored angels. Whoso scorneth His service and is proud, all such will He assemble unto Him. Oh God, bless Your Messenger and Your servant Jesus [NW] son of Mary. Peace be on him the day he was born, and the day he dies, and the day he shall be raised alive! Such was Jesus, son of Mary, (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. It befitteth not (the Majesty of) God that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! [W] When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is. Lo! God is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path. God (Himself) is witness that there is no God save Him. And the angels and the men of learning (too are witness). Maintaining His creation in justice, there is no God save Him.[51]

And on the outer face of west and northwest walls:

> In the name of God, the Merciful the Compassionate. There is no God but

> God. He is One. Praise be to God, Who hath not taken unto Himself a son, and Who hath no partner in the Sovereignty, nor hath He any protecting friend through dependence.

These texts chosen do not simply assert the fundamental principle of Islam and the power of its prophecies in comparison to those who had gone before —they focus on Christ. While offering praise for Jesus (Isa) and Mary (Marium), no other prophets or family of prophets are mentioned by name. They attack the Christian claim of Christ's divinity with the forceful and insistent cry that Jesus could not have been the son of God.

The most ominous command is taken from Sura 4, *The Women*:

> followers of the Book! do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against Allah, but (speak) the truth; the Messiah, Isa son of Marium is only an apostle of Allah and His Word which He communicated to Marium and a spirit from Him; believe therefore in Allah and His apostles, and say not, Three. Desist, it is better for you; Allah is only one God; far be It from His glory that He should have a son, whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His, and Allah is sufficient for a Protector.[52]

In conceiving of the Dome, Malik invited comparison, not only with the Holy Sepulcher, but also between Christian and Muslim on the essential nature of God's power and mercy. The Dome would stand as a symbol of the profound difference between the God of Abraham sparing the life of Isaac, and the Christian God allowing his so-called son Jesus Christ to die brutally on the Cross. This had been incomprehensible to Muhammad; no God of Abraham would act in such a way. Christ did not die on the cross nor was he divine. This was the lesson that Malik chose to carry across the walls of the Dome of the Rock.

There were scholars in the nineteenth century who refused to believe that Islam, emerging so quickly from a culture of nomads, could have formed any architecture, let alone object of such power as the Dome of the Rock. They searched for other possible authors, raising the question whether under Persian occupation between 614 and 617, when the city had a Jewish administration, work had begun on rebuilding the Temple. Some have considered the possibility that the Byzantines, in repossessing the city in 627, built over the foundations of what the Jews had begun.[53] A circular plan,

similar in scale to the Dome, had been used in building the Jewish shrine on Mount Moriah, but the armies of Umar took the city before it could be completed.

There are two compelling arguments against the proposition that Dome was not an Islamic creation. First, it would seem utterly improbable that the Christian community, on regaining power in the city in 617, would have allowed anything to survive that would contradict Christ's proclamation that nothing be built on the Temple Mount. And second, they would never have given support to the construction of a building that would have both emulated and overshadowed the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, diminishing its significance.

Muslim sources offer various explanation as the why Malik built the Dome. An explicit and in many ways disingenuous reason comes from the tenth century. It begins with an explanation of why Malik's son had to construct the mosque in Damascus:

> Now one day I said, speaking to my father's brother, “O my uncle, truly it was not well of Caliph al-Walid to spend so much of the wealth of the Muslims on the mosque at Damascus. Had he expended the same on making roads or for caravanserais or in the restoration of fortresses, it would have been more fitting and more excellent of him.” But my uncle said to me in answer, “O my little son, you have not understanding! Truly al-Walid was right and he was prompted to do a worthy work. For he beheld Syria to be a country that had long been occupied by the Christians, and he noted herein the beautiful churches still belonging to them, so enchantingly fair and so renowned for their splendor; even as are the Holy Sepulcher and the churches of Lydda and Edessa. So he sought to build for the Muslims a mosque that should prevent their admiring these and should be unique and a wonder to the world. And in like manner, is it not evident how Caliph Abd al-Malik, noting the greatness of the Dome of the Holy Sepulcher and its magnificence, was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of Muslims and so erected, above the Rock, the Dome which is now seen there.[54]

By this record, the Dome was built to counter the influence and “the greatness of the Dome of the Holy Sepulcher and its magnificence…lest it should dazzle the minds of *Muslims*.” The reference to the Cathedral in

Edessa is relevant; its form could have been one of the models for the Dome. It is the subject a Syrian poem from around 600 CE:

> Small though it is it resembles the universe.
>
> Its vaults expand like the heavens and shines with mosaics as the firmament with stars.
>
> Its soaring dome compares with the heaven of heavens, where God resides and its four arches represent the four directions of the world with their variegate colors like the rainbow.
>
> It soars like the mountains of the earth,
>
> Its marble walls shine like the image that is not man-made.[55]

Save for the four arches that represent the directions of the world, this could be an evocation of Malik's vision for the Dome of the Rock.

Some texts suggest a political intention behind the construction, stating that the Dome was built to displace the *Ka'ba* as the focus of the prayer:

> Then Abd al-Malik forbade the people of Syria to make the pilgrimage [to Mecca], and it is by this reason that Abdullah ibn Zubayr was wont to seize on them during the time of the pilgrimage and force them to pay him allegiance—which, Abd al-Malik having knowledge of, forbade the people to journey forth to Mecca. But the people murmured thereat saying “How do you forbid us to make the pilgrimage to God's house, seeing that the same is a commandment of God upon us?” But the caliph answered them, “Has not Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri [the traditionalist who knew many of the Companions of the Prophet] told you how the Apostle of God did say ‘Men shall journey to but three mosques, the Holy Shrine (at Mecca), my mosque (at Medina) and the mosque of the Holy City (of Jerusalem)’? So this last is now appointed to you (as a place of worship) in place of the Holy Shrine of Mecca. And this Rock, of which it is reported that the Apostle of God set his foot when he ascended into heaven, shall be to you in the place of the *Kaaba*.”Then Abd al-Malik built above the rock a dome and hung it around with curtains of brocade, and he instituted doorkeepers for the same, and the people took up the custom of circumambulating the rock, even as they had paced around the K*aaba*, and the usage continued thus all the remaining days of the dynasty of the Umayyads.[56]

For Sunni Islam this text is difficult, as it suggests that this much-admired caliph would have considered displacing the Ka'ba and forbidding pilgrimage to Mecca: the most fundamental obligation of the religion. Yet circumstances could be seen as lending credence to the allegation. Given the fierceness of the struggle, building the Dome could have been a strategic part of his war with the Shi'a in Mecca; a struggle that ended with the destruction of the Ka'ba, and triumph of the Sunni.

Whether or not the intent was to displace the Ka'ba, so strong was the form and presence of the Dome that it inevitably became a destination for the faithful—a place of pilgrimage:

> It was the fifth of Ramadan of the year 458 [March 5, 1047 CE] that I thus came to the Holy City; and the full space of a solar year had elapsed since I had set out from home, having all that time never ceased to journey onward, for in no place had I yet sojourned to enjoy repose. Now the men of Syria and of the neighboring parts call the Holy City [Bayt al-Muqaddas] by the name of al-Quds ["the Holy"]. And the people of these provinces, if they are unable to make the hajj, will go up at the appointed season to Jerusalem and there perform their rites, and upon the feast day slay the sacrifice, as it is custom to do (at Mecca on that same day). There are years when as many as 20,000 people will be present in Jerusalem during the first days of (the pilgrimage month of) Dhu al-Hajj.[57]

Umar's appropriation of Temple Mount for Islam was a brilliant tactical act. It established an ancient foundation for the new religion, voiding the prophecy of Christ and resanctifying the ground of the Jews. It was the importance of Mount Moriah and its association with Abraham in the books of the Jews that led Umar to commandeer it. Malik's Dome then affirmed the superiority of the new faith and the victory of Islam. Its symbolic decoration and above all, the texts, enforced his message. However the conception and construction of the Dome should be seen as but one part—albeit the most lasting—of Malik's vast plan to Islamize the peoples in all the lands under his control. By the end of the Umayyad period the Islamic empire stretched from the Himalayas to Gibraltar. Malik restructured the administration of all territories, never excluding those of other faiths from holding power, and made Arabic the official language, which had begun to displace Greek as the language of the church even before he came to power. And finally he issued a

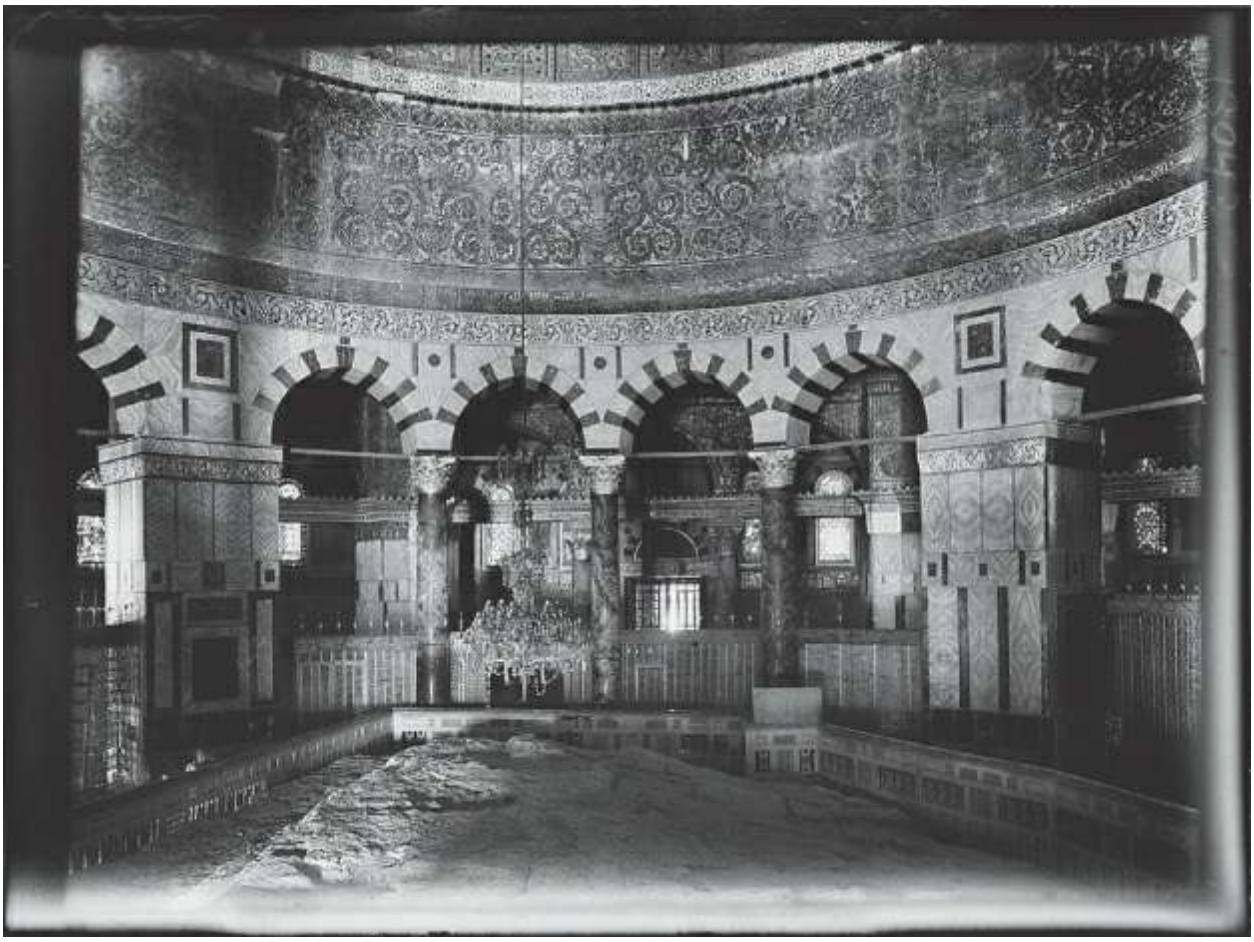
new and singular coinage across the empire, imprinting on it the same message as in the Dome of the Rock—“there is no God but God.”

The Dome (Figure 5.3) possesses exceptional qualities of oneness and universality. In ancient Rome the power of any one object was always secondary to the power of the city. The structure of Christian Jerusalem was similar, where even the most sacred of the Christian shrines the Tomb of Christ, and the Holy Sepulcher, were contained within the overall order of the city. In part, the dominance and independence of the Dome was achieved because of the Christian abandonment of Temple Mount, but it was also part because the new rulers had no physical place in the past history of Jerusalem. The followers of the Prophet who came to the city in the decades after the conquest made no attempt to occupy Christian districts. This detachment gave Malik the opportunity to create a structure that not only confirmed the power of the new faith and the new administration, but also gave it an authority wholly independent of Christian reality. The Ka'ba in Mecca had clearly established for the Arab peoples the divine force of a single dominant structure. In the Dome of the Rock, the idea of Allah is separate from the human. It is a heavenly vessel, either just arrived or preparing to engage the heavens. It could not fail to inspire the most extravagant myths (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.3 Among the earliest photographs of the Dome on Temple Mount from the east. From *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem*, photographs by Sergeant J. M. McDonald and P. Bergheim. 1865

Figure 5.4 The interior of the Dome in the early twentieth century. From the

Matson (G. Eric and Edith) Photograph Collection in the Library of Congress, call number LC–DIG–matpc–00526



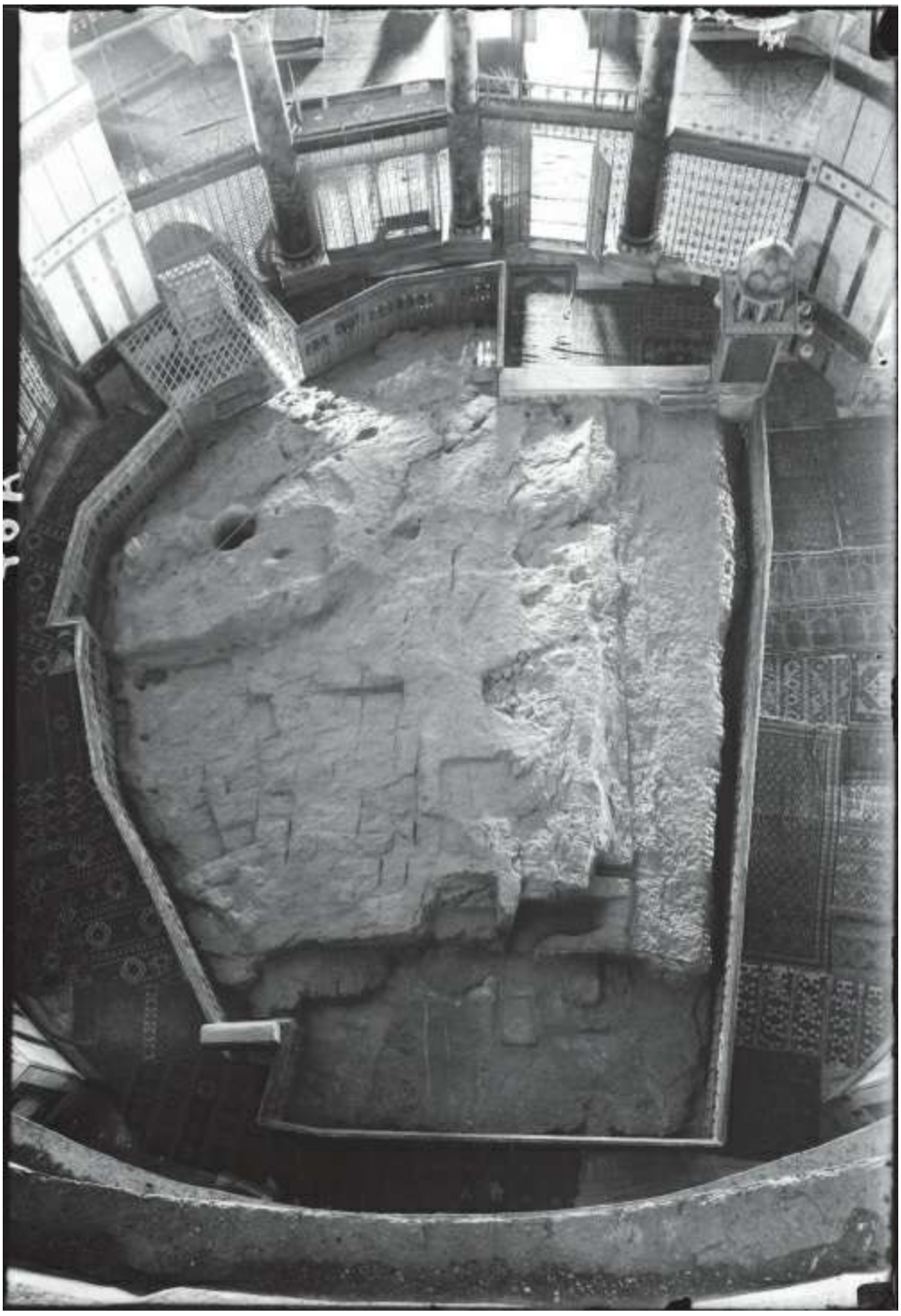
The Rock

The Noble Sanctuary became a necessary stop on the path to Mecca, on the Hajj, and, as the numbers of pilgrims grew so did the myths and traditions attached to the Dome, and especially to the Rock it sheltered. These myths and traditions were encouraged by religious leaders, but also desired by the pilgrims; they enhanced the aura of sanctity on the Mount and stimulated the imaginations of the faithful. In this, Islam was learning from the Christians, for whom pilgrimage and tales of the miraculous were central, not only in sustaining the faith, but in maintaining the finances of the church. In Islam, some myths grew out of the Qur'an and some from the *Hadiths*, the elaborate texts that sought to clarify the words of the Prophet.[58] Many had echoes in

Jewish and Christian myth, and as they evolved their many forms became intertwined one with another.

By the ninth century, these traditions were circulated widely; they strongly suggested the spiritual benefits of visiting Temple Mount. Among them was the assertion that al-Alqsa on the Noble Sanctuary was the first place of prayer after the formation of the Ka'ba, and only forty years younger. Here the concern was not with the age of the building, but of prayers that had been offered here since the time of Solomon. A prayer said here was five hundred times more valuable than prayers said elsewhere (there were variations in these estimates of worth). It was believed to be one of the few places where God permitted the creation of a building in his name and in which his unutterable name could be spoken. It was here that God lifted Jesus to Heaven, and Muslim myth agreed with the Christian view that here Christ would return to earth. As this Rock was the first land to appear above the waters after the flood, it was therefore closest to heaven. And its divine power would prevent the creatures of the apocalypse from getting to it. This is where the first man, Adam, was created, and where he died. It is where Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac and where his bones are interred (Figure 5.5).[59]

Figure 5.5 The surface of the Rock beneath the Dome, A superb photograph from the early twentieth century. Stereoscopic image taken between 1900 and 1920. From the Matson (G. Eric and Edith) Photograph Collection in the Library of Congress, call number LC–M32–A–64



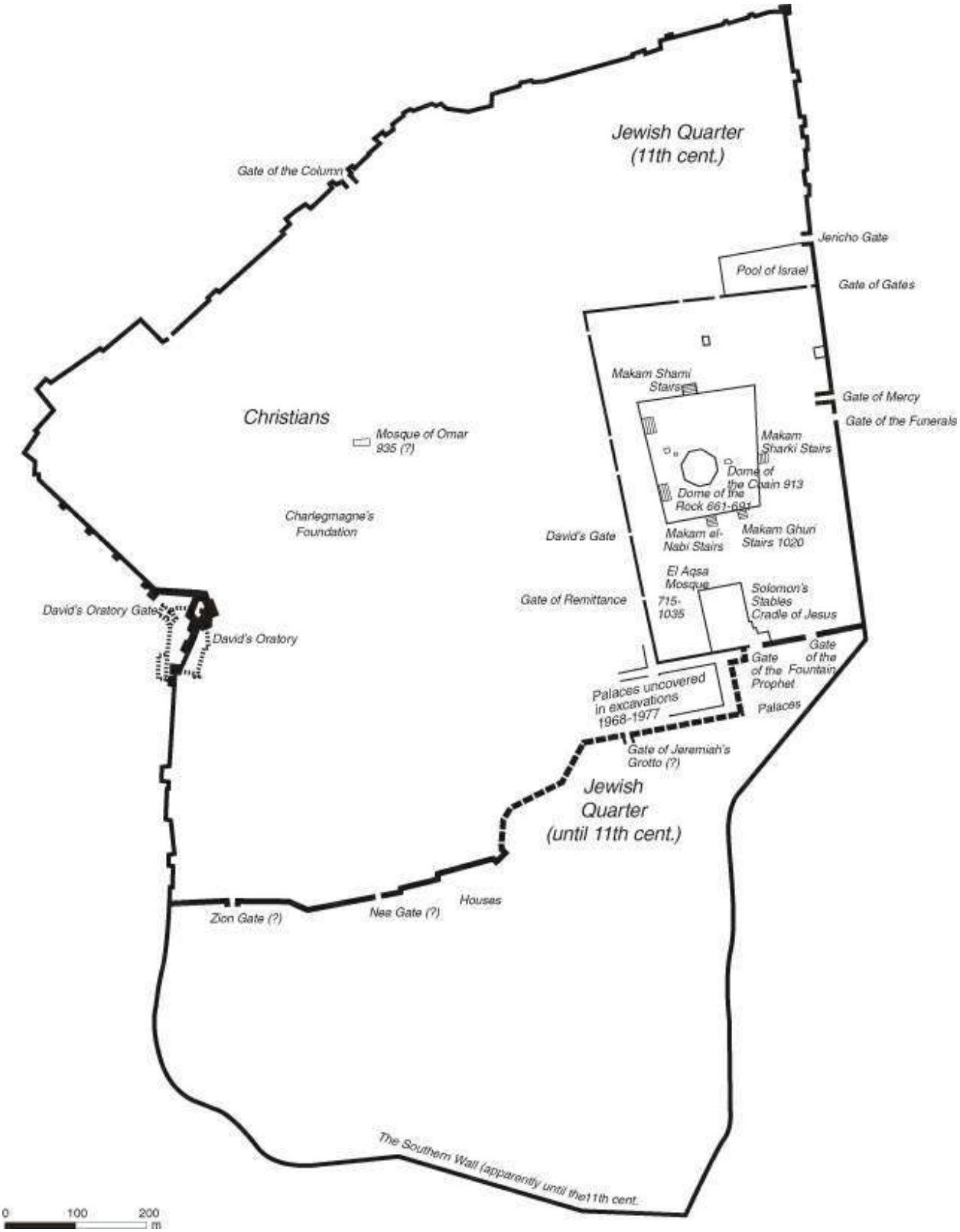
The most powerful of these traditions grew out of the first lines of Sura 17, titled *The Children of Israel*:

> Glory be to Him Who made His servant to go on a night from the Sacred Mosque to the remote mosque of which We have blessed the precincts, so

that We may show to him some of Our signs; surely He is the Hearing, the Seeing.

Much of the Qur'an is thus engaging, demanding explanation and explication, and it was the interpretation of this passage that gave form to both al-Isra, Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Jerusalem, and to the Mi'raj, his ascent to heaven and audience with God. Where was “the remote mosque,” the furthest temple, al-Aqsa, in Arabic? How was the servant, Muhammad, carried by night? And slowly the answers emerged: he was carried by the Angel Gabriel on a great winged steed, al Buraq, (Lightning), carried from Mecca to the Sinai, to Bethlehem and on to Jerusalem. Finally swooping down on to al-Haram al-Sharif, the Noble Sanctuary, where it was tethered to the ring in a rock that had been used by all past prophets as they began their journey to heaven. Here he was greeted by all the prophets who had preceded him; Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and the many others. Then there arose from a fissure in the Rock that now lies beneath the Dome a golden ladder reaching into the heavens. This he slowly ascended to enter and into the presence of God. And it was then that the word of God was revealed as it had been to those who preceded him, but Muhammad would be the final prophet (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Islamic Jerusalem. Maps © Carta Jerusalem, have been redrawn by permission



Within the Dome of the Rock believers are in the presence of the place where the prophet was carried to heaven. Al-Isra and wal-Mi'raj the “Night

Journey” transformed Temple Mount into al-Haram al- Sharif, the Noble Sanctuary.

Notes

[1] From Al-Muqadasi: *Description of Syria including Palestine* 22–23. In Guy Le Strange (1971), Palestine Pilgrims Text Society 3, Reprint. New York: AMS Press New York 1971. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 239. Al-Muqaddasi, Arab traveler (946–1000), was a geographer, and author of a noted work on the culture and life of the diverse peoples of the Islamic empire.

[2] The Ka'ba pre-dated Muhammad's formation of Islam. His house in Medina was evolved into a gathering place and was not formed as architecture.

[3] Sura 17,*The Children of Israel*: 4–7, The Holy Qur'an. All quotations from the Qur'an are from the University of Michigan Library On Line eBook Initiative *The Koran*, translated by M. H. Shakir and published by Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1983.

[4] Most Muslims believe that it was Ishmael not Isaac whom Abraham (Ibrahim) planned to sacrifice and it was Ishmael himself who convinced Abraham that his dream would be fulfilled in the sight of Allah.

[5] All the modern commentaries are based on the early biographies (eighth and ninth century), especially the Sirah of Ibn Ishaq.

[6] Sura 2,*The Cow*: 142–144, The Holy Qur'an.

[7] The concept of the mosque is any setting in which prayers said; it need not be a building.

[8] E. F. Peters (1993), *The Distant Shrine, The Islamic Centuries in Jerusalem*, p. 49. © 1993 AMS Press, New York, with permission.

[9] From Mahmoud M. Ayoub (1984), *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*. Albany: State University of New York Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 168–169,

[10] Sura 29,*The Spider*: 46, The Holy Qur'an.

[11] The Romans had named it *Arabia Felix*, literally “Arabia the Happy.”

[12] Pliny the Elder (CE 23–79) ridiculed these stories and boldly declared

that “all these tales, however, have been evidently invented for the purpose of enhancing the price of these commodities.” It was around this time that the delegation was sent out by the Emperor of China to make formal contact with Rome [*Rum* to the Chinese]. Arab traders created so many difficulties that the mission was abandoned. The imperial court in Rome first became interested in China when they captured silk banners during a battle of the Persians; they had never seen such a luxurious fabric.

[13] Such a business depended not only on close ties with the families controlling the shipping but on knowledge of the countries with whom they would trading: not just what they produced, the nature of their produce, but the character of their cities, their ways of life, their religion. The exchange was based not only on the spices that had long been sought-after in the West but in understanding the tastes and desires of those at the other end of the exchange. So the people of Mecca, by necessity, were not only aware of the wealth of the great cities of Byzantium; they would have had an equal sense of the much more extensive cultures and peoples of Asia.

[14] The stability of this trade and its importance to economies would have produced a key awareness of political events in India and beyond. The political structure of southern India was well developed. Trade was conducted with the trinity of Tamil powers in the region (namely the Cara, Coga, and P'ya kingdoms). Records from the region in CE 200 tell of the purchase of Roman gold and lamps and the pleasure of Roman wine; a tantalizing glimpse of the richness of the trade exchange. They might have been aware of the unification of China in the Sui dynasty and beatific influence of Buddhism, which set the stage for the great and stable dynasty of the Tang.

[15] It is estimated that Syria had lost more than half its population to the bubonic plague during the sixth century (see chapter IV, notes [39] and [40]). The plague continued to meander across the Middle East until well into the eighth century.

[16] Money was made at each point of transfer along the way, greatly multiplying the price of the goods by the time they reached their final destination.

[17] It was one of the most prosperous market centers in the region, a meeting point of the caravan routes from the south and the crucial roads that linked

Baghdad, Persia, and Transoxiana with the Mediterranean.

[18] Protected by being transformed into a fortress centuries ago.

[19] Adjacent to the enigmatic *Cryptoporticus*, an elegantly shaped subterranean tunnel whose function remains a mystery.

[20] Ibn Hisham 1/180–183; Za'd Al-Ma'ad 1/17.

[21] Led by King Khosrow II grandson of the warrior king Khosrau I.

[22] Sura 30,*The Romans*: 2–3, The Holy Qur'an.

[23] Sura 30,*The Romans*: 4, The Holy Qur'an.

[24] From W. E. Kaegi (1969)"Initial Byzantine reactions to the Arab Conquest," *Church History* 38: 139–149. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 175.

[25] Christian sources record that the patriarch would only surrender the city to the caliph, so Umar was summoned.

[26] Guy Le Strange (1965, reprinted from the original edition of 1890), *Palestine under the Muslims*, p. 140. Beirut: Khayats.

[27] In general terms this takes the form of the treaties that Muhammad had made in establishing a hold on the cities of southern Syria.

[28] From Tabari, *Annals I*. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 186.

[29] He died in 923 CE.

[30] This text is clear about its source: "on the authority of al-Walid ibn Muslim, it is reported as coming from a shaykh of the sons of Shadad ibn Aws, who had heard it from his father, who held it from his grandfather."

[31] Literally "dunghill"; this was a conscious corruption of the Arabic word for the Anastasis, *al Kayama*.

[32] Le Strange, *Palestine under the Muslims*, p. 141.

[33] The most elaborate is from Islamic sources and concerns the reaction of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius to a letter from Muhammad inviting him to commit to Islam:

> Al-Walid states on the authority of Sa'id ibn Abd al-Aziz that the letter of the Prophet [calling on world leaders to acknowledge his prophethood] had come to the emperor [Heraclius] while he was residing in the Holy City. Now at that time there was over the Rock in the Holy City a great dungheap which completely masked the prayer niche of David and which the Christians had put there in order to offend the Jews; and further, even

the Christian women were wont to throw their (menstrual) cloths and clouts in the place so that there was a pile of them there. Now when the emperor had read the letter of the Prophet, he cried out: “O men of Rum, you are the ones who will be slain on this dungheap because you have desecrated the sanctity of this sanctuary. It will be with you just as it was with the Children of Israel who were slain because of the blood of John, son of Zakariyva.” (Le Strange, *Palestine under the Muslims*, p. 139).

[34] Peters, *The Distant Shrine*, p. 51.

[35] According to Guy Le Strange in *Palestine Under the Muslims*, he was a liar.

[36] Peters,*The Distant Shrine*, p. 50.

[37] The term al-Aqsa has only been applied to the building in the last hundred years; previously it was known as al-Mugatta, which translates as the covered place: al-Aqsa referred to whole area.

[38] Among the places Arculf visited were the sacred sites of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee; Damascus and Tyre; and the Nile River and the volcanic Aeolian Islands (modern Eolie Islands). He drew plans of the churches of the Holy Sepulcher and of Mount Zion in Jerusalem, of the Ascension on Olivet, and of Jacob's Well at Shechem. His journeys came to the attention of the Venerable Bede, who inserted a brief summary of it in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Bede also wrote a separate and longer digest that endured throughout the middle ages as a popular guidebook to the eastern holy places.

[39] *Pilgrimage of Arculfus in the Holy Land*, Translated by Rev. James Rose Macpherson, B. D. (1895), London.

[40] Ed. A. Holtz (1971),*The Holy City, Jews on Jerusalem*, pp. 122–123. New York: W. Norton.

[41] Bernard Lewis (1974), *“On That Day…” Melanges d'Islamologie*. Leiden: E. J. Brill. It continues:

> And Israel will be freed of all their sins
>
> And will no more be kept far from the house of prayer.
>
> Israel will go forth from the City and turn eastwards,

And taste no bread for five and four days.

And their Messiah will he revealed and they will be consoled.

And they will share pleasant secrets with their King;

And they will raise praises to their King;

And all the wicked will not rise up in the Judgment.

[42] Reigning from 656 to 661.

[43] Armstrong, *Jerusalem*, p. 235.

[44] Shiite Muslims consider burial in Karbala a path to paradise.

[45] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 377.

[46] *The Mishna Yoma* 5:5. Translated from Hebrew by H. Danby: Oxford U P, Oxford, 1933.

[47] Oleg Graybar (1959), "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," *Ars Orientalis* III, 33–62. Ann Arbor, 1959. Also in *The Haram Al-Sharif; An Essay in Interpretation* BRIIFS vol. 2, 2, 2000 (http://www.riifs.org/journal/essy_v2no2_grbar.htm, accessed April 2, 2012). Graybar is the most insightful scholar on the Dome.

[48] Graybar, "The Umayyad Dome."

[49] Apart from the insertion of the name of a later caliph.

[50] In Islam where an image of any kind was suspect, truth lay in the word.

[51] www.islamic-awareness.org/History/Islam/Inscriptions/DoTR.html (accessed April 2, 2012).

[52] Sura 4, *The Women*: 171, Holy Qur'an (U. Michigan).

[53] Peters,*The Distant Shrine*, p. 60.

[54] Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Muslims*.

[55] Peters,*The Distant Shrine*, p. 63.

[56] Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Muslims*.

[57] From Nasir-i Khusraw (1971), *Diary of a Journey through Syria and Palestine*, G Le Strange, Palestine: Pilgrims Text Society 4. Reprint, New York: AMS Press, New York. In Peters, *Jerusalem*. p. 244.

[58] The earliest collections are associated with Muqati b Suleimani, who died in 767 only two generations after the Dome was complete.

[59] This last may have been a confusion of the Land of Moriah with the Mount Moriah, confusion present, as we have seen, in the writings of Josephus.

Chapter 6

Templum Domini

Although it had remained for many believers a vision, ibn Ishaq's influential biography of the Prophet written in 767, presented the Isra, Muhammad's "Night Journey" from the Ka'ba in Mecca to the Haram, and the Mi'raj, his ascent to heaven, as actual events. Ishaq wrote in the voice of the Prophet as he recalled Muhammad describing the journey to his companions:

> While I was asleep within the northern enclosure of the Ka'ba, Gabriel [the angel] came and kicked me with his foot. I sat up, but perceived nothing; therefore I again laid myself down. He came again and the same thing happened again, but when he kicked me the third time he took hold of my arm, so that I rose and went with him to the gate of the mosque. And lo! There I saw a beast, white in color, resembling part mule and part donkey, with two wings covering its hind legs, and with its forelegs placed as far as its sight could reach.[1]

On al-Haram al-Sharif Gabriel led Muhammad through the seven heavens into the presence of God. A God who demanded that prayers be said fifty times daily, which Muhammad believed excessive and managed, through negotiations, to reduce to five.

In these same years a new strain of Islam emerged: Sufism, which offered a path to spiritual union with God. The Sufis saw the Mi'raj as an ultimate spiritual experience, Muhammad in ecstasy before God being granted divine knowledge.[2] Belief in the reality of the Mi'raj (Arabic for "the ladder") shaped Sufi ritual and led many to find shelter around and within the walls of the Haram. Beyond the Sufis the reality of the Mi'raj became for Islam a symbol of the need for a continual return and surrender to God. It filled the imaginations of those who came to worship in Jerusalem and in their *sunny*,[3] their devotions, they relived the "Night Journey" and the ascent to heaven. Such devotions needed a physical presence to compete with the increasingly

noisy Christians.

By the eighth and ninth centuries Christian pilgrims were led into an elaborate passage of rituals retracing the events from the Last Supper to the crucifixion. In response, Muslims created many small shrines and oratories across the Haram, retracing the key moments in the Isra and the Mi'raj. They would pray at a southern gate, (the west Hulda gate) renaming it the Gate of the Prophet. Here the faithful would imagine the angel Gabriel leading Muhammad on to the Haram. This from the journals of the Persian traveler Nasir-I Khusraw writing in 1047:

> The Prophet—peace and blessing be upon him–on the night of his Ascent into Heaven passed into al-Haram al-Sharif through this passageway, for the (lower) gateway opens onto the road to Mecca… This gateway of the Haram leading into the tunneled passageway is closed by a double door, and the wall of the Haram [Herod's Southern Wall] outside it is nearly fifty ells high [125 feet]…[4]

He added: “The reason for piercing this gateway was to enable those inhabitants of the suburb lying obliquely beyond to enter the Haram area at their pleasure, without having to pass through the other quarters of the city.” Herod's thousand-year-old arrangements were still intact.

They would then pray at the southwest corner, where Muhammad had tethered Buraq, and where the Royal Stoa once stood. The Dome of the Prophet and the Station of Gabriel were constructed just to the north of the Dome of the Rock, marking the place where Muhammad prayed with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, before the golden ladder arose from a rock and carried him to heaven. Ishaq's biography has Muhammad giving a lively description of his fellow prophets:

> As to Abraham, I have never seen a man more resembling your companion [Muhammad] than he, nor your companion resembling any other more than he. But as for Moses, he is a tall, dark, lively man with curled hair and a long nose; the son of Mary, is neither tall nor short, with flowing hair, and a countenance shining as if he had just come out of a bath, and you would imagine that water is dripping from his head although there is none on it.[5]

This image of Jesus “shining as if he had just come out of a bath”

transcends the ages.

Other shrines were created to mark and celebrate the past religious history of the Haram. East of the Dome of the Rock, the Dome of the Chain marked the place where David had judged the Children of Israel, revealing dishonesty by a beam or chain of light. North of this was the Chair of Solomon where the king prayed after building the Temple, and in vaults below the southeast corner Islam created its tribute to Christianity in the Oratory of Mary and the Shrine of the Cradle of Jesus. Writing in 985, the renowned geographer and native son al-Muqaddasi, reported on these and more:

> Among the holy places within are the prayer niches of Mary, *Zakariyya*, Jacob, and *al-Khidr*, the prayer stations of the Prophet and of Gabriel, the Places of the Ant and of the Fire and of the *Ka'ba*, and also the Bridge *al-Sirat*, which shall divide Heaven and Hell.[6]

But none of these diminished the strange power of the rock beneath the Dome. Nasir-i Khusraw wrote of what was in the mind of the pilgrim on entering the Dome of the Rock:

> The Rock inclines on the side that is toward the qibla-point [the south], and it appears as if someone had walked heavily on the stone when it was soft like clay and the imprint of his toes had remained there. There are on the Rock seven such footmarks, and I have heard it stated that Abraham —peace be upon him—when he was a boy, and that he had walked over this place and that the footprints were his.

It conveys a visceral sense of the Rock becoming fluid in the presence of the Prophet:

> They say that on the night of his Ascension into Heaven the Prophet–peace and blessing be upon him–prayed first at the Dome of the Rock, laying his hand upon the Rock. As he went out, the Rock, to do him honor, rose up, but he laid his hand on it to keep it in its place and firmly fixed it there. But by reason of this rising up, it is even to this present day partly detached… Beneath the Rock is a large cavern, where candles burn continually, and they say that when the Rock moved in order to rise up [in honor of the Prophet], this space below was left empty….[7]

Belief in the Mi'raj gave profound sanctity to al-Haram al-Sharif. It came to be accepted that here on this place would be the Last Judgment. Allah, after

balancing all who had ever lived between the two books recording the deeds of each life, would allow the good to remain in paradise on the Haram. The damned would be thrown over the wall into the hell of Wadi Jahannum—the Kidron Valley. The Golden Gate in the eastern wall that led to the valley was renamed the Gates of Mercy and Repentance. This became the favorite gathering place of the Sufis. It much impressed Nasir-i Khusraw:

> They say that this gateway was constructed by Solomon, son of David–peace be upon him–to please his father. When you enter this gateway facing east there are on your right hand two great doors. One of them is called the Gate of Mercy and the other the Gate of Repentance, and they say of this last that it is the gate where God–may He be exalted and glorified–accepted the repentance of David–upon whom be peace.[8]

In 750 the Umayyads were overthrown by the family of the uncle of Muhammad, al Abbas. The Abbas then formed the second dynasty of the Muslim Empire, the Abbasid. They moved the capital from Damascus to Baghdad and, in contrast to the westward-looking Umayyad, turned Islam to the east. Though it could not be ignored, Jerusalem was of little interest to them. Some sense of this is present in the records of the request to the first Abbasid Caliph, Abu Ja'far al-Mansur, that he repair al-Aqsa Mosque, damaged in an earthquake in 746 CE: “I have no money,”[9] he answered, then ordered the plates of gold from the doors of the mosque melted down and sold to pay for the reconstruction.[10]

In Rome on Christmas day 800, Charles, King of the Franks was crowned the Holy Roman Emperor. He brought a vision of Europe reborn and was hailed as *Carolus Magnus*, Charles the Great. His capital in Aachen was proclaimed the New Jerusalem and his throne shaped to resemble Solomon's.[11] Confusion over imperial succession in Constantinople and on the rights to the title of Holy Roman Emperor, led to conflict with Byzantium and to Charles reaching out to the new Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad. Agreements were reached between Aachen and Baghdad which gave Charles the right to construct religious buildings in and around Jerusalem. After his death some western chronicles recorded that the Caliph had promised much more, most significantly an agreement giving the Emperor and his successor's possession in perpetuity of the Anastasis, the place of the resurrection. This belief marked the beginning of what would lead to the absolute division of

Christianity between eastern and western churches, and drive western Christianity into the Crusades.

The Jews Return

By the ninth century many Jews had resettled in the city, and by the end of the tenth they were briefly permitted to pray around the Temple precinct.[12] It was an anguished and impoverished community. A letter from this time seeking funds writes of the "pitiful assembly":

> We, the Rabbanite community, a pitiful assembly living in the vicinity of the Temple site, regret to inform you that we are constantly harassed by those foreigners who overrun the Temple grounds. We pray, "How long, O Lord, shall the adversary reproach? Shall the adversary blaspheme Your name forever?" Our sole comfort shall be when we are once again permitted to walk freely about its gates, to prostrate ourselves in prayer for Jerusalem's total liberation with its Temple restored… Yes, there is a synagogue on the Mount of Olives to which our Jewish confreres gather during the month of Tishri. There they weep upon its stones, roll in its dust, encircle its walls, and pray.[13]

It was also on the Mount of Olives, on the last day of Sukkoth that the community circled seven times in song and prayer, recalling the processions that had once passed around the great altar in front of the Temple sanctuary.

From a late-tenth-century chronicle describing the works of the benefactors to the Jewish community comes one notable reference. It is in a passage listing the gifts and treasures brought to the city by a much regarded rabbi, (including the bones of revered parents), and concludes, "oil for the inner altar of the sanctuary at the Western Wall; and for the synagogues and communities, far and near; and for those who were mourning the loss of the Temple."[14] Much puzzled over, this is now thought to have been a vault in the western wall, a chamber subsequently used as a mosque in the name of al-Burak, Muhammad's steed. It remains today behind "Barclay's Gate."[15] The existence of such a synagogue beneath Temple Mount has however no direct connection to what has become the focus of all Jewish worship—the Western Wall, the unique power of which is referred to as early as the sixth century in

a commentary on the book of Lamentations from the Midrash Rabba ("Great Midrash"). It asks why the Roman General Vespasian did not destroy the Western Wall. The answer "from heaven it was decreed that it not be destroyed, Why? because the presence of God is in the west."

There is a later reference in a ninth-century analysis of a passage from the Song of Solomon, "My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice,"[16] This was interpreted as signifying, "Behold he [God] stands behind our wall, behind the western wall of the Temple, which the holy One…swore would never be destroyed. The Priests' Gate and the Hulda would also never be destroyed until the Almighty renews them." A tenth-century explication[17] stated, "The Presence of God never leaves the Western Wall."

In his codification of Jewish law, written in the twelfth century, Maimonides, the great intellect of medieval Judaism, wrote:

> There was a stone in the Holy of Holies, at its western wall, upon which the Ark rested… When Solomon built the Temple, knowing that it was destined to be destroyed, he built underneath, in deep and winding tunnels, a place in which to hide the Ark. It was King Josiah who commanded the Ark be hidden in the place which Solomon had prepared; as it is said: "And he said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, 'Put the Holy Ark in the house which Solomon the son of David did build; there shall no more be a burden on your shoulders; now serve the Lord your God.'"

From a careful reading of scripture, Maimonides also concluded that the Sanctuary, which must, in his mind, have included all of Temple Mount within the walls, would be forever sacred:

> Even through the Sanctuary is today in ruins because of our iniquities, we are obliged to reverence it in the same manner as when it was standing. One should not enter save where it was permissible; nor should anyone sit down in the Court of act irreverently while facing the East Gate; for it is said: "You shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary" [Leviticus 19: 30]. Now just as we are obliged to keep the Sabbath for all time to come, so must we reverence the Sanctuary for all time to come;

for even thought it is in ruins, its sanctity endures.[18]

In Christian Europe there was a gathering anticipation as the thousand years since the birth of Christ approached. Several verses from the book of Revelation came to be viewed as predicting that the final victory over evil would come at the end of the year one thousand.

> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; *and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*
>
> But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.
>
> Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, *and shall reign with him a thousand years…*[19]

Although its meaning is far from clear, the belief spread that, with the end of evil, God would give some sign to the world. Records from France tell of churches preparing for the “Millennium of the Incarnation” (Christ's birth). When that passed without any sign, they then prepared for the “Millennium of the Passion,” the crucifixion. Thousands were drawn to outdoor revival meetings, which brought all levels of society together. From the commentaries of Raoul Glaber, who traveled in central France around 1000, an “immeasurable multitude” was making the pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They came from across Europe; peasants, merchants and nobles, streaming to the holy city, to be present at the second coming. And God's failure to recognize the passing of these thousand years only made the need to bring forth the millennial kingdom more passionate, intensifying the devotion of the throngs of pilgrims in continual procession through Jerusalem.

During these events Jerusalem was under the rule of the fifteen-year-old Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim-bi-Amir Allah “Ruler by God's command,” also known as the “Mad,” for reasons which will become evident.[20] It was a time when all three religions coexisted in the city. The Muslims were the minority, the Jews were poor, and the Christians were confident and wealthy. Coexistence was not without tension. Al-Muqaddasi wrote that “Everywhere

the Christians had the upper hand." In 1007 Caliph al-Hakim ordered the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. As reported by the Syrian historian Ibn al-Qalanisi writing more than a century later, al-Hakim asked why the Christians went to the Holy Sepulcher:

> "This church," [he was told] "is near the al-Aqsa Mosque. The Christians are extremely devoted to it and go there every Easter from every land… When the Christians go there on the day of their Easter, and their metropolitan appears in public and they all raise their crosses and perform their prayers and ceremonies, all that makes a great-impression on their sprits and introduces confusion in their hearts. They hang their lamps on the altar, *and then by a trick they cause fire to appear in the balsam oil in their lamps*, since this oil had property of igniting with the oil of jasmine and it produces a flame of remarkable whiteness and brilliance… *Those who see it imagine that the fire has come down from heaven and lit the lamps*."

Al-Hakim was incensed by such devious religious practice and ordered his agent in Palestine to gather support go to Jerusalem and destroy the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

> Al-Hakim's agents then arrived, surrounded the church and gave the order to loot it and had carried away whatever was left, which was of considerable value. Then the building was destroyed stone by stone. A report was drawn up, signed as he had ordered, and send to al-Hakim. News of the event spread in Egypt. The Muslims rejoiced at hearing it and showered al-Hakim with gratitude for what he had done. His information agents reported on the public reaction, which pleased him a great deal and [thus emboldened] he ordered the destruction of churches and synagogues in the various provinces.[21]

The Christians of Egypt had sent word of the impending attack to the patriarch of the city and much of church treasure was saved. A Christian view of al-Hakim from more than a century later, survives in the writing of William of Tyre, chronicler of the Crusades:

> The sin of this ruler so far exceeded those of his predecessors and successors alike that his name has become proverbial to later generations who read of his madness. This man was so notorious for every form of

> impiety and wickedness that his life, hateful to the sight of both God and man, deserves a special treatise. Conspicuous among the many other impious acts for which he was responsible was that of the total demolition of the church of the Lord's Resurrection…[22]

Al-Hakim's agents totally destroyed the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Constantine's great Roman basilica, yet much of the rotunda surrounding the tomb of Christ survived, suggesting that the major intent was to remove the setting for the performance of the Holy Fire.

The popular view was that al-Hakim's destructive spirit was the product of a childhood confused between a Muslim father and Christian mother. William of Tyre wrote of this:

> Report says that the caliph used this extreme measure to prove to the infidels that he was loyal to them. For the name of Christian was used as a reproach against him, because he was born of a Christian mother. Hence, desiring to clear himself of that charge, he ventured to perpetrate that crime. In the belief that thereafter no reproaches could be cast against his person and that his rivals would have opportunity for no further malicious attacks, he had overthrown the cradle of the Catholic faith, the fount from which the Christian religion flows.[23]

This destruction reflected the Muslim antagonism to the zeal with which the Christians practiced their religion—secret rituals around the shrines, seductive magical performances at the altars, noisy processions, chanting and the endless tolling of bells. The Holy Fire was only the most spectacular. All such ostentation diminished the authority of Islam. In subsequent years Hakim had many other churches and synagogues destroyed.[24] Yet the Easter ritual of “The Descent of the Holy Fire,” which caused such concern, would continue to be performed for centuries to come.

Nasir-i Khusraw, the great Persian author, came to the city forty years later and found a resilient Jerusalem eager to receive pilgrims from all the religions:

> It was the fifth of Ramadan of the year 458 [March 5, 1047 CE] that I thus came to the Holy City… Now the men of Syria and of the neighboring parts call the Holy City by the name of *al-Quds* [‘the Holy’]. And the people of these in the appointed season go to Jerusalem and there

> perform their rites, and upon the feast day slay the sacrifice, as it is customary to do [at Mecca on that same day]. There are years when as many as 20,000 people will be present in Jerusalem during the first of the days of [the pilgrimage month of] Dhu al-Hajj; for they bring their children also with them to celebrate their circumcision.

The text suggests that each enjoyed the presence of the other: “From all the countries of the Greeks too, and from other lands, the Christians and the Jews come up to Jerusalem in great numbers in order to make their visitation of the Church [the remains of the Holy Sepulcher] and the synagogue that is there.”[25]

The First Crusade

No attempt was made to rebuild Constantine's 700-year-old church. There was neither the means nor the technology to even attempt it. The Anastasis was reassembled, albeit crudely, from the remains of the rotunda that had framed the tomb of Christ: this was paid for by the Byzantine Emperor.[26] The destruction of the great church did not cause the Crusades, but it did make western Christians hostile to Islam. William of Tyre included it in his list of issues he believed had helped the cause. The destruction did however, allow the Byzantine Emperor to become directly involved in the administration of Jerusalem, giving the Christian community relative autonomy in the city.

In previous centuries Christianity had shown little interest in Islam, but by the last decade of the eleventh there was increasing anxiety throughout Europe on the threat to Christians in Muslim lands. This was the major topic at a council on church reform called by Pope Urban II in 1095.[27] It became so because of a letter from the Byzantine emperor Alexius I Comnenus. In it he made an urgent plea for the western church to join him in the struggle against the Muslim Turks. At the conclusion of the council Urban II gave a sermon of such vehemence that it alone can be seen as having willed western Christianity into the Crusades. The sermon has not survived but some who were present recorded it. This from a monk named Robert:

> From the confines of Jerusalem and the city of Constantinople a horrible tale has gone forth and very frequently has been brought to our ears;

namely, that a race from the kingdom of Persians, an accursed race, a race utterly alienated from God, a generation indeed which has neither directed its heart nor entrusted its spirit to God, has invaded the lands of those Christians and has depopulated them by the sword, pillage, and fire; it has led away a part of the captives into its own country, and a part it has destroyed by cruel tortures; it has either entirely destroyed the churches of God or appropriated them for the rites of its own religion.

And then the most monstrous charge:

They destroy the altars, after having defiled them with their own uncleanness. They circumcise the Christians, and the blood of the circumcision they either spread upon the altars or pour into the vases of the baptismal font… On whom, therefore, is the task of avenging those wrongs and of recovering this territory [lost by the Byzantine Christians] incumbent, if not upon you? You, upon whom above other nations God has conferred remarkable glory in arms, great courage, bodily energy, and the strength to humble the hairy scalp of those who resist you…

Repossessing Jerusalem for Christianity was from the first the focus of the Crusade. Urban II had called western Christianity to arms:

Let, therefore, hatred depart from among you, let your quarrels end, let wars cease, and let all dissensions and controversies slumber. Enter upon the road to the Holy Sepulcher; wrest that land from the wicked race, and subject it to yourselves. The land, which, as the Scripture says, "flows with milk and honey," was given by God into the possession of the Children of Israel.

Jerusalem is the navel of the world; the land is fruitful above all others, like another paradise of delights. This, the Redeemer of the human race has made illustrious by His coming, has beautified by His presence, has consecrated by suffering, has redeemed by death, has glorified by burial. This royal city, therefore, situated at the center of the world is now held captive by His enemies, and is in subjection to those who do not know God, to the worship of the heathen. Therefore she seeks and desires to be liberated and does not cease to implore you to come to her aid… Accordingly, undertake this journey for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.[28]

He ended by giving remission of penance for sin to all who would join and crying out across the church *Deus le volt* “God wills it.” This became the battle cry of the Crusades.

The letter from the Byzantine Emperor was written not to the pope, but to Count Robert of Flanders, who had fought for the Emperor against the Turks. A text has survived, though it is thought by some scholars to be a contemporary forgery albeit based on an actual document. It is the source of the incendiary passages in the Pope's plea:

> For they circumcise the boys and youths of the Christians over the Christian baptismal fonts, and in contempt of Christ they pour the blood from the circumcision into the said baptismal fonts and compel them to void urine thereon; and thereafter they violently drag them around in the church, compelling them to blaspheme the name of the Holy Trinity and the belief therein. But those who refuse to do these things they punish in diverse ways and ultimately they kill them. Noble matrons and their daughters, whom they have robbed, they, one after another like animals, defile in adultery. Some, indeed, in their corrupting shamelessly place virgins before the faces of their mothers and compel them to sing wicked and obscene songs, until they have finished their own wicked acts.[29]

News of such defilement, carried by gossip across Europe, rapidly produced hatred against peoples and cultures they barely knew—shameless propaganda. By 1096, in groups large and small, an army emerged from across France and Germany and as far as England, that would eventually total 60,000. All, by various paths, were making their way to Jerusalem. One group of Germans massacred Jewish communities as they passed though the cities along the Rhine, some indication of the uncertainty of who was the enemy and of the insanity that had been cultivated. It would take three years for this army to come together and attack Jerusalem.

In July of 1099, Jerusalem and the Temple Mount were taken with extreme force: an anonymous Christian eyewitness saw all:

> Now that our men had possession of the walls and the towers, wonderful sights were to be seen. Some of our men—and this was the more merciful course—cut off the heads of their enemies; others shot them with arrows so that they fell from the towers; others tortured them longer by casting them into the flames. Piles of heads, hands, and feet were to be seen in

the streets of the city. It was necessary to pick one's way over the bodies of men and horses.

But these were small matters compared to what happened in the Temple of Solomon [al-Aqsa Mosque], a place where religious services were ordinarily changed. What happened there? If I tell the truth, it will exceed your powers of belief. So let it suffice to say this much at least, that in the Temple and porch of Solomon men rode in blood up to their knees and bridle reins. Indeed, it was a just and splendid judgment of God that this place should be filled with the blood.[30]

The Iman's account of that day recorded that:

In the al-Aqsa Mosque the Franks slaughtered more than 70,000 people, among them a large number of Imans and Muslim scholars, devout and ascetic men who had left their homelands to live lives of pious seclusion in the Holy Place. The Franks stripped the Dome of the Rock of more than forty silver candelabra, each of them weighting 3,600 drams, and a great silver lamp weighting 44 Syrian pounds, as well as 150 smaller silver candelabra and more than 20 gold ones, and a great deal more booty.[31]

The chronicle of the chaplain to the Crusader Stephen of Blois, Fulcher of Chartres, describes the aftermath:

After this great slaughter they [the Crusaders] entered the houses of the citizens, seizing whatever they found there. This was done in such a way that whoever first entered a house, whether he was rich or poor, was not challenged by any other Frank. He was to occupy and own the house or palace and whatever he found in it as if it were entirely his own. In this way many poor people became wealthy.

Then the clergy and the laity, going to the Lord's Sepulcher and His most glorious Temple, singing a new canticle to the Lord in a resounding voice of exaltation, and making offerings and most humble supplications, joyously visited the holy places as they had long desired to do.[32]

Fulcher would return in the Christmas of that same year, to a stinking city: “Oh what a stench there was around the walls of the city, both within and without, from the rotting bodies of the Saracens slain by our comrades at the time of the capture of the city, lying wherever they had been hunted down.”

There was some evidence that the Jews had been spared, but a recently discovered letter from an elderly pilgrim who had been delayed on the road to Jerusalem by the invasion, is explicit: “The Franks arrived and killed everybody in the city whether of Ishmael or of Israel; and the few who survived the slaughter were made prisoners.”[33] The Jews were not spared.

Crusader Jerusalem

Despite the promise of property and wealth, in the months following the capture most of the crusading soldiers and pilgrims returned home. A city that had once held a hundred thousand was reduced to a population in the hundreds. William, Archbishop of Tyre, in what is viewed as the reliable history of the Latin Kings in Jerusalem, *Historia rerum in partibus transmarinis gestarum—A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, observed, “the people of our country were so few in number and so needy that they scarcely filled one street.”

Immediately after the conquest Godfrey of Bouillon was elected to govern and took the title of Defender of the Holy Sepulcher. He set up his base in a ruined al-Aqsa Mosque, which the crusaders named *Templum Solomonis*, the Temple of Solomon. The Dome of the Rock was named the *Templum Domini* “Temple of the Lord,” and made the official residence of the Latin Patriarch of the city. Just two years after the conquest in 1102, an English pilgrim named Saewulf made the journey to the city. As he recorded his walk to Temple Mount he explained significance of each place he passed:

> You go down from out Lord's Sepulcher twice as far as a bow can shoot, to the Temple of the Lord, [Dome of the Rock] which is to the east side of the Holy Sepulcher…. The place where Solomon built the Temple of the Lord was anciently called Bethel, whither, at the Lord's command, Jacob went on his journey and rested there, and saw in the same place the ladder whose top touched the heavens, and he saw angels ascending and descending upon it and said: “Truly, this place is holy,” as we read in Genesis. Here he set up the stone for the title and built an altar, pouring oil on it. In the same place, afterwards, by divine inspiration, Solomon made a Temple for the Lord…

This seems to conflate several ancient myths and has echoes of the Night Journey. It continues:

> [T]he Temple of the Lord was of magnificent and incomparable workmanship, and wonderfully decorated with every ornament, as you read in the Book of Kings…in the middle of the Temple there was seen a rock, lofty and large and scooped out beneath, on which was the Holy of Holies…[34]

Leaving the Dome he then came to the "Golden Gate, where Joachim, the father of the Blessed Mary, by command of the angel met his wife Anna. Through the same gate the Lord Jesus coming from Bethany on Palm Sunday entered the city sitting on an ass…" This twelfth-century pilgrim was in no doubt that Christ entered the city through this gate. Nor was there any doubt that through "this same gate Emperor Heraclius returned triumphant from Persia with Our Lord's Cross."

Arriving just four years later in what must have been a dispirited city, the French Abbott Daniel could hardly contain his pleasure in visiting the Dome of the Rock, which he called the Holy of Holies. He also knew its history:

> The Church of the Holy of Holies is about two bow-shots from the Church of the Resurrection of Christ. The interior of the Holy of Holies is wonderfully and artistically decorated with mosaics, and its beauty is indescribable. It is round in form, and the exterior is covered with magnificent paintings, of whose beauty it is impossible to give any idea. Beneath this same dome is a grotto cut in the rock. It is there that the prophet Zachariah was killed; formerly his tomb and marks of his blood were to be seen, but no longer. The ancient Church of the Holy of Holies had been destroyed. Nothing is left of the ancient building of Solomon except the original foundations of the Temple, which the prophet David began to lay.[35]

He correctly named the builder: "The cavern and the stone beneath the cupola are the sole remains of the ancient buildings; as for the present church, it was built by a chief of the Saracens named Umar."

The chronicles of Fulcher of Chartres, though written in Jerusalem in 1127, are the recollections of someone who entered the city with the conquest. He was also well informed as to what he was seeing:

> In the same city is the Temple of the Lord, round in shape, where Solomon in ancient times erected the earlier magnificent Temple. Although it can in no way be compared in appearance to the former building [The Temple of Solomon?], still this one [the Dome of the Rock] is of marvelous workmanship and most splendid appearance…

And the relation of the Rock to the fate of the Ark:

> In the middle of the Temple, when we first entered it and for fifteen years thereafter, was a certain native rock. It was said that the Ark of the Lord's Covenant along with the urn and tables of Moses was sealed inside of it, that Josiah, king of Judah, ordered it to be placed there saying "You shall never carry it from this place," for he foresaw the future captivity. But this contradicts what we read in the descriptions of Jeremiah, in the second book of Maccabees, that he himself hid it in Arabia, saying that it should not be found until many people should be gathered together.

Fulcher was in the city long enough to see the Rock hidden from view as the Dome was slowly converted into a cathedral:

> Moreover, this rock, because it disfigured the Temple of the Lord, was afterwards covered over and paved with marble. Now an altar is placed above it, and there the clergy have fitted up a choir. All the Saracens hold the Temple of the Lord in great veneration. Here rather than elsewhere they preferred to say the prayers of their faith, although such prayers were wasted because offered to an idol set up in the name of Muhammad. They allowed no Christian to enter the Temple.[36]

It is not clear what he meant by the phrase "disfigured the Temple." Hiding the Rock would have protected the Christian imagination from even contemplating Muhammad ascending to heaven from this place, and certainly was a deliberate affront to Islam. Yet the most probable reason was to construct a platform for worship.

Templum Domini

It was not until 1115, some fifteen years after the occupation, that work began to fully transform the Dome into a place for Christian worship. As the seat of the Patriarch of the city the Temple had the status of a cathedral yet

could not be allowed to diminish the Holy Sepulcher; its significance was as vessel of sacred history. A cross was put atop the dome, Latin texts were placed over some of the Arabic inscriptions, and the Rock and the cavern it formed were hidden beneath a marble platform. This carried both the altar and the choir, creating a space for worship. Surrounding all was a beautifully wrought metal grill. North of the Dome and probably attached to it, the Christians built a cloister around which the cathedral clergy were housed.[37] The congregation approaching the Templum Domini for Sunday prayers would have entered Temple Mount by the gate on the Western Wall, the Beautiful Gate, and approached a domed structure no longer standing in isolation but surrounded by buildings housing the staff of the Patriarch. This extensive reconstruction took 27 years to complete. The grill survives to this day.

The journals of the German John of Würzburg, who visited the city between 1160 and 1170, describe the work:

> Now this same *Templum Domini*, which had been adorned by someone both within and without with a wondrous casing of marble, has the form of a beautiful rotunda, or rather, a circular octagon… At the entrance to the Temple towards the west, above the vestibule, is an image of Christ with this inscription about it: “My house shall be called the house of prayer.” It also has a door on the south looking towards the building of Solomon [al-Aqsa]. The western door also looks towards the Sepulcher of the Lord, where also is the Beautiful Gate through which Peter was passing with John when he answered the lame man begging for alms, “Silver and gold I have none, etc.”

It was clear to John that the changes made by the Christians remained an affront to Islam:

> Above…is raised on high a round vault, painted within, and covered on the outside with lead, on the summit of which the figure of the Holy Cross has been placed by the Christians, which is very offensive to the Saracens and many of them would be willing to expend much gold to have it taken away; for although they do not believe in Christ's passion, nevertheless they respect this Temple because they adore their Creator therein, which nevertheless must be regarded as idolatry [by Christians] on the authority of St. Augustine, who declares that everything is idolatry

which is done without faith of Christ.[38]

However, the Latin administration not only allowed a Muslim presence but also accepted Muslim pilgrims in the city and on to Temple Mount. The traveler Ali al-Harawi compiled a guide for pilgrims during the occupation; he reported that all the texts from the Qur'an around the Dome were plainly to be seen:

> The Dome of the Rock had four entrances. I went in there at the time of the Franks in A.D. 1173, and I saw, opposite the entry that leads to the Grotto of the Spirits *[Maghârat al-arwâh]* and close to the iron grille [that surrounded the Rock], an image of Solomon, son of David, and further to the west, atop a lead doorway, a representation of the Messiah in gold and encrusted with precious stones On the arch that is atop the eastern doorway, next to the Dome of the Chain, there are written the name of al-Qa'im, Commander of the Faithful, the Sura of Sincerity and the formulae “Praise be to God” and “Glory be to the God.” The same is true of all the other entries without the Franks having changed anything.[39]

Another traveler from these same years was Usama ibn Munqidh, whose writings on life in an increasingly Arabized Christian Jerusalem remain witty and personable. He tells of a visit to the Dome of the Rock:

> I was present myself when one of them [a Christian] came up to Amir Mu'în al-Din-God have mercy on him–in the Dome of the Rock and said to him: “Would you like to see God as a baby?” The Amir said that he would, and the fellow proceeded to show us a picture of Mary with the infant Messiah on her lap. “This,” he said, “is God as a baby.”[40]

Amir replied, in disgust, “Almighty God is greater than the infidels' concept of Him!”

Even the most educated of the Crusaders had only a vague sense of the Muslim history of Temple Mount. The text of an anonymous pilgrim, written in the years of the Latin Kingdom, draws on the Old Testament and presumably on the writing of Josephus for the history up to the destruction by Rome; it moves into inventive uncertainty on the history after that, particularly on who built al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock:

> Of a truth I will essay, as well as I am able, to set forth to all readers of

> the book the truth of this present Bethel, albeit no man knows for certain by what prince or in whose reign it was restored. Some say that it was rebuilt in the reign of Emperor Constantine by his mother Helena, out of reverence for the Holy Cross, which she found there. Others say that it was rebuilt by Emperor Heraclius, out of reverence for the Lord's Cross, which he had gloriously brought back in triumph from Persia. Others say that it was built by Emperor Justinian.

This most earnest pilgrim sought Muslim help in answering the question as to who built the Dome, and came close to the truth. He employed a guide to help translate the inscriptions round the Dome, looking for a name—and found *Amir al Mamun*, the name inserted over that of Abdel Malik in the original dedication, and the pilgrim translated what he heard—Amir al-Mamun—into something familiar—Admiral Memphis:

> [O]thers [said] that it was built by a certain Admiral Memphis in honor of *Allah Kabir*, that is, God Most High, which the Saracenic inscription thereon proves to me most like the truth. Wherefore the Temple, which is devoutly venerated by men of all tongues alike, is called the fourth Temple.[41]

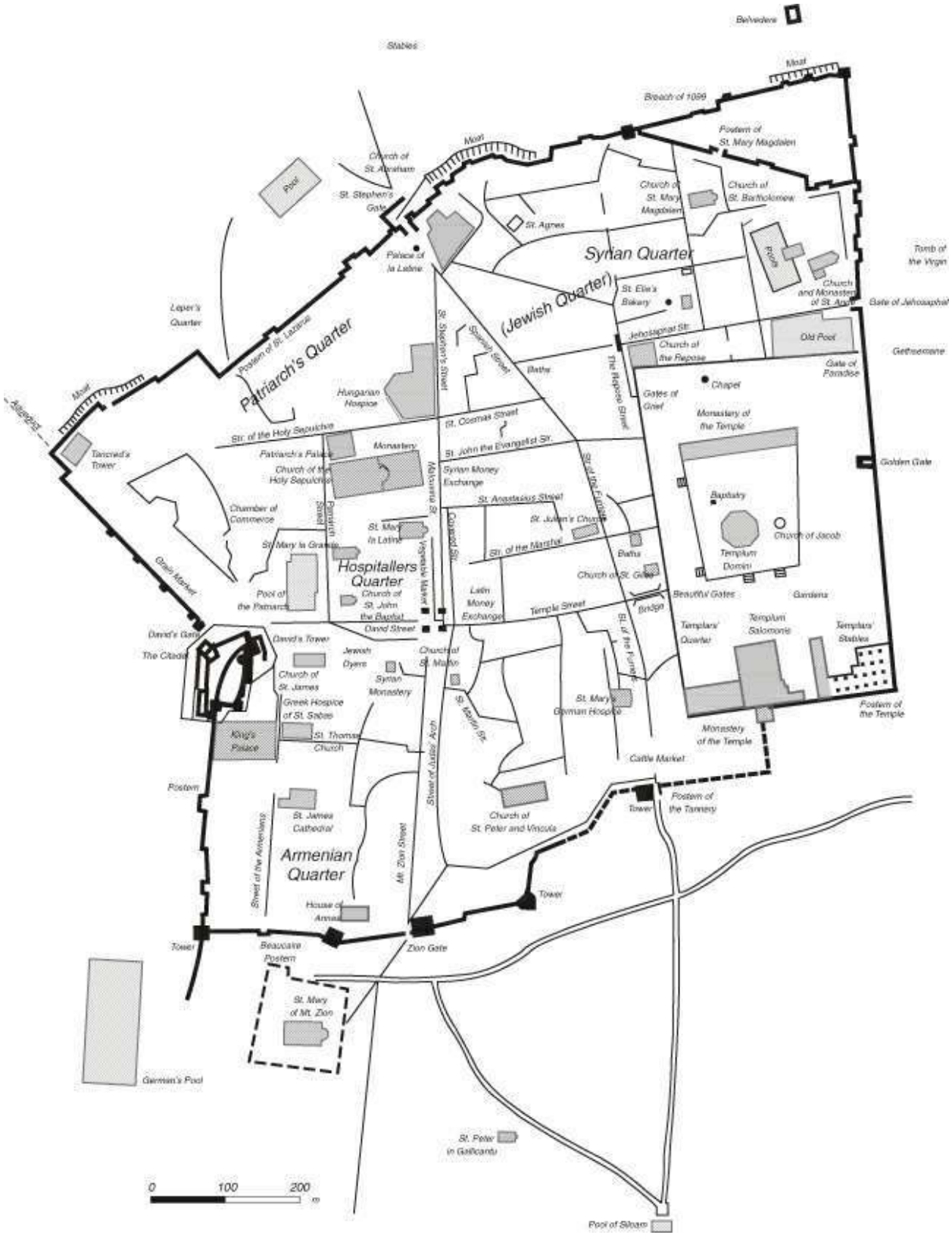
An illustration of the Latin Kingdom survives from these years; a page from a twelfth-century book of psalms (Plate 17).[42] It is a Crusader map, presumed to have been made in Palestine and later brought back to Europe bound within a Bible. It is the earliest surviving record of the two qualities Jerusalem possessed in the medieval Christian mind—it was perfect in form, and the center of the world. Dominant is the great circular figure of Jerusalem, Palestine reduced to a series of vignettes on the margin. In the convention of the time east is at the top of the page with Jericho. In the foreground is a galloping Crusader on a white charger; a red cross on his shield and on the standard flying from the head of the lance piercing the side of his Muslim foe. Above the head of the knight is the cryptic “Gius,” a contraction of Robert Guiscar.

Though it is an idealized depiction, all the major elements of the city are both recognizable and in the right place. It is a circular walled city divided into quarters by two main avenues. The transverse avenue (running across the page) leads from St. Stephen's Gate to Zion Gate, and the vertical avenue connects David's Gate with the Temple Mount. In each quadrant major

monuments are given recognizable symbols. The tower of David is on the lower right, Calvary and Golgotha hover above the Holy Sepulcher portrayed as poignant circle within a square. Above are the churches of Mary Magdalene and Saint Anne.

On the green road that bisects the plan is the *Claustrium Salomonis*, Solomon's Cloister. Above are the long roofs of al-Aqsa Mosque, which has become the *templu salomonis*. Clearly shown are three arches, the Crusader's additions to the eastern façade, which still survive. *Aurea porta*, the Golden Gate is clearly marked into the Temple wall. And at the center of the top, entered through the *porta speciola*, the Beautiful Gate, is the strong symmetrical form of the Dome of the Rock, now the *templum domini* (written in mediaeval shorthand *teplum dm*) (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1 Crusader Jerusalem. Maps © Carta Jerusalem, redrawn by permission


Belvedere
Stables
Moat
Breach of 1099
Postern of St. Mary Magdalen
Church of St. Abraham
Pool
St. Stephen's Gate
Moat
Church of St. Mary Magdalen
Church of St. Bartholomew
St. Agnes
Syrian Quarter
(Jewish Quarter)
Tomb of the Virgin
Palace of la Latine
Leper's Quarter
Postern of St. Lazarus
Patriarch's Quarter
St. Stephen's Street
Stairway Street
St. Elia's Bakery
Church and Monastery of St. Anne
Gate of Jehosaphat
Jehoshaphat St.
Old Pool
Gethsemane
Church of the Repose
Gate of Paradise
Moat
Hungarian Hospice
Baths
The Repose Street
Chapel
Gates of Grief
Monastery of the Temple
Str. of the Holy Sepulchre
St. Cosmas Street
Angelina
Tancred's Tower
Patriarch's Palace
Monastery
St. John the Evangelist Str.
Church of the Holy Sepulchre
Syrian Money Exchange
Str. of the Furnace
Golden Gate
Chamber of Commerce
Prostrate Street
St. Anastasius Street
Baptistery
St. Mary la Grande
St. Mary la Latine
St. John's Church
Str. of the Marshal
Church of Jacob
Templum Domini
Hospitallers Quarter
Baths
Church of St. Giles
Pool of the Patriarch
Church of St. John the Baptist
Latin Money Exchange
Temple Street
Beautiful Gates
Gardens
Templars' Quarter
Templum Salomonis
Templars' Stables
David's Gate
The Citadel
David's Tower
David Street
Jewish Dyers
Church of St. Mariin
Bridge
Str. of the Furnace
Church of St. James
Syrian Monastery
Greek Hospice of St. Sabas
St. Mary's German Hospice
Postern of the Temple
King's Palace
St. Thomas Church
Monastery of the Temple
Cattle Market
Postern
Street of Justice Arch
Church of St. Peter and Vincula
Tower
Postern of the Tannery
St. James Cathedral
Armenian Quarter
Street of the Armenians
Mt. Zion Street
Tower
House of Annas
Tower
Beaucaire Postern
Zion Gate
St. Mary of Mt. Zion
German's Pool
St. Peter in Gallicantu
0
100
200
m
Pool of Siloam

The Templars in the Palace of Solomon

The Templars or the Poor Knights of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon, arose around 1119 to protect pilgrims from Europe from raids by Muslim bands as they traveled through Palestine. They were encouraged by Baldwin II, King of Jerusalem, who gave them quarters in a wing of his palace, the former al-Aqsa Mosque. From this base they protected Temple Mount and from this place they took their name, the Templars. When founded they had vowed obedience to the patriarch of Jerusalem, but in 1139 Pope Innocent II placed them under his authority, thus freeing their actions from any local jurisdiction. They became an effective military force protecting the Crusader states and the passage of people and goods between Europe and the Holy Land. This led to their controlling the collection, storage, and transportation of bullion, for which they built a network of treasure storehouses across Europe. This responsibility for such wealth allowed them to become bankers to both kings and pilgrims and gave them power and influence throughout Europe and the Latin Kingdoms. All this was managed from a fortified military base constructed out of the ruins of al-Aqsa Mosque.

The ambition of the Templars can still be felt in the writings of the pilgrim Theoderich of Würzburg, who was in the city in 1172:

> Next come, on the south, the palace of Solomon, which is oblong and supported like a sanctuary and covered by a great round dome so that, as I have said, it resembles a church. This building, with all its appurtenances, has passed into the hands of the Knights Templars who dwell in it and all the other buildings connected with it, having many stores of arms, clothing, and food in it, and are ever on the watch to guard and protect the country.

Herod's substructure that supported the southeast corner of the Royal Stoa had now become King Solomon's stables:

> They have below them stables for horses built by King Solomon himself in the days of old. This stable adjoins the palace, a wondrous and intricate building resting on piers and containing an endless complication of arches and vaults… No man could send an arrow from one end of the

building to the other, either lengthways or crossways, at one shot with a Balearic bow.

And Theodorich saw the vaults below and the buildings on the platform as one, for him the platform was the roof of the Templar palace:

> Above it abounds with rooms, solar chambers, and buildings suitable for all manner of uses. Those who walk on the roof of it find an abundance of gardens, courtyards, antechambers, vestibules, and rainwater cisterns; while down below it contains a wonderful number of baths, storehouses, granaries, and storehouses for wood and other needful provisions.

He then described an extensive building program between the western walls of al-Aqsa and the western wall of the Temple precinct:

> On another side of the palace, this is to say, on the western side, the Templars have erected a new building. I could give the measurements of its height, length, and breadth of its cellars, refectories, staircases, and roof, which rises with a high pitch unlike the flat roofs of that country; but even if I did so, my hearers would hardly be able to believe me. They have built a new cloister there in addition to the old one which they had in another part of the building. Moreover, they are laying the foundations of a new church of wonderful size and workmanship in this place, by the side of the great court.[43]

No evidence of the “new church” survives, it could have been planned to add a more spiritual cast to their fortress treasury: It is unlikely that any were aware that they were occupying the space where Christ drove out the moneychangers.

From such texts and from the archeological evidence it would seem that that Templars took full possession of the southern end of the Temple platform. The major entry to their palace was not from the west, but at the foot of the southern wall, through the west Hulda gates. Here they built a massive double gate beneath a tower, still standing in ruins behind al-Aqsa, wide enough to allow horses and riders to pass through and leading through an antechamber into the cavernous storage rooms and stables beneath the platform. They would have used Herod's ancient tunnel to ascend to the great reception hall that had been al-Aqsa Mosque. Their reconstruction transformed the southern end of Temple Mount into a highly secure military

base, separating the increasingly secular Templars from the religious community around the Dome. However a surviving Muslim text reveals a tolerant coexistence between Islam and Christianity and the continual use of al-Aqsa for prayer:

> When I was in Jerusalem I used to go up to al-Aqsa Mosque, beside which is a small oratory, which the Franks have made into a church. Whenever I went into the mosque, which was in the hands of Templars who were friends of mine, they would put the little oratory at my disposal so that I could say my prayers there. One day I had gone in, said the Allah Akbar and risen to begin my prayers, when a Frank threw himself on me from behind, lifted me up and turned me so that I was facing east. "That is the way to pray!" he said. Some Templars at once intervened, seized the man and took him out of my way, while I resumed my prayer. But the moment they stopped watching him, he seized me again and forced me to face east, repeating that this was the way to pray. Again the Templars intervened and took him away. They apologized and said: "He is a foreigner who has just arrived today from his homeland in the north and he has never seen anyone pray facing any other direction than east." "I have finished my prayers," I said and left, stupefied by the fanatic who had been so perturbed and upset to see anyone praying facing the *qibla*![44]

William, Archbishop of Tyre writes of the increasing disfavor into which the Templars were falling:

> For a long time they kept intact their noble purpose and carried out their profession wisely enough. At length, however, they…withdrew from the Patriarch of Jerusalem; from whom they had received the establishment of their predecessors had shown him. To the churches of God they also become very troublesome, for they drew away from them their tithes and first fruits and unjustly disturbed their possessions.[45]

The subsequent demise of the Kingdom of Jerusalem removed the Templars' reason for being, and their overreaching power had made enemies —they were disgraced, then punished. Their last grand master burned at the stake in 1314.

Saladin

By the 1180s the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and indeed all the Crusader states, had become increasingly isolated. In the previous decade the defeat of the Byzantine armies by the Turk Seljuk[46] ended a dream that would have linked the lands of Byzantium with the Latin Kingdoms. In 1186 a capricious and violent Crusading prince, Renaud de Chatillon, in the midst of confusion over who should reign in Jerusalem, attacked a Muslim caravan in which a sister of Saladin, sultan of Egypt and Syria, was traveling, thus breaking a truce and allowing Islam's most able religious and military leader to use all in his power to confront the Latin Kingdoms. In July 1187 Saladin's army destroyed the Crusader army at Hattin on the road to Tiberias. Renaud was captured in the battle, taken to Saladin, who berated him for breaking the truce and refusing to make reparations, and then cut off his head. The greatest trophy from the battle was the relic of the "True Cross," which Heraclius had returned to the city. The Christians had carried it into battle for protection; Saladin had it paraded through the streets of Damascus upside down.[47]

Saladin had risen to power in the forces of the Emir Nur al-Din. On taking Egypt in 1169 al-Din wrote of his wish to "banish the worshipers of the cross from al-Aqsa." In that same year he appointed Saladin chief counsel to the Fatimid Caliph in Cairo. In 1171 Saladin forcibly removed the Caliph, ending the Shi'a Fatimid dynasty, returning Egypt to Sunni Islam. Saladin's war against the Latin Kingdoms was Jihad; he would liberate Jerusalem. In the three months following the victory at Hattin he took possession of the major cities in the Crusader's Kingdom. On October 2 1187, an undefended Jerusalem surrendered. Saladin had planned to kill every Christian in revenge for the slaughter when the city was taken in 1099, but the Christians compelled him to negotiate. The Arab historian Imad al-Din recorded the transaction. The Christians were represented by Balian of Ibelin, lord of Nablus:

> [Balian] presented himself and once again began asking for a general amnesty in return for surrender. The sultan [Saladin] still refused his requests and entreaties to show mercy. Finally despairing of this approach Balian said: "Know, O Sultan, that there are very many of us in this city…if we see that death is inevitable we shall, by God kill our

children and our wives, burn our possessions so as not to leave you a dinar or drachma or a single man or woman to enslave. When this is done, we shall pull down the Sanctuary of the Rock and *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* and the other sacred places, slaughtering the Muslim prisoners we hold—5,000 of them—and killing every horse and animal we possess. Then we shall come out and fight you like men fighting for their lives…

Saladin was persuaded, none were slaughtered, but all were ransomed or sent into slavery.

Saladin's forces entered Jerusalem on the anniversary of the Mi'raj, the Prophet's ascension to heaven, and rushed to the Haram to regain the Dome for Islam. Imad al-Din describes the scene:

At the top of the cupola of the Dome of the Rock there was a great gilded cross. When the Muslims entered the city on the Friday, some of them climbed to the top of the cupola to take down the cross. When they reached the top a great cry went up from the city and from outside the walls, the Muslims crying the *Allah akbar* in their joy, the Franks groaning in consternation and grief…[48]

The task of restoring the Haram began immediately. Traversing the platform that had held Herod's Royal Stoa, the great nave and aisles of al-Aqsa Mosque had been divided into the barracks for the Knights Templar: mess halls, sleeping quarters, stores for food and weapons, all were demolished so people could once again gather for morning prayers:

Saladin accepted the surrender of Jerusalem, he ordered the prayer niche (in al-Aqsa) to be uncovered…. [T]he Templars had built a wall before it, reducing it to a granary and, it was said, a latrine, in their evil-minded hostility. East of the qibla they had built a big house and another church. Saladin had two structures removed and unveiled the bridal face of the prayer niche. Then he had the wall in front of it taken down and the courtyards around it cleared so that the people coming in Friday should have plenty of room…. The Quran was raised to the throne and the Testaments cast down. Prayer mats were laid out, and the religious ceremonies performed in their purity; the canonic prayers were heard and pious orations given continually; benedictions were scattered and sorrow was dispersed.

Liberating the place liberated the spirit:

> The mists dissolved, the true directions came into view, the sacred verses were read, the standards raised, the call to prayer spoken and the clappers [of the Christians] silenced, the muezzins were there and not the priests, corruption and shame ceased, and men's minds and breaths became calm again.

It was a simpler task to recover the Dome of the Rock; all its major elements had survived. First the Rock had to be uncovered:

> As for the Rock, the Franks built over it a church and an altar, so that there was no longer any room for the hands that wished to seize the blessing from it or the eyes that longed to see it. They had adorned it with images and statues, set up dwellings there for monks and made it into a place for the Gospel, which they venerated and exalted to the heights. Over the place of the (Prophet's) foot they set up an ornamental tabernacle with columns of marble, marking it as the place where the Messiah had set his foot; a holy and exalted place, where flocks of animals, among which I saw a species of pig, were carved in marble. The Rock, the object of pilgrimage, was hidden under constructions and submerged in all this sumptuous building. So the sultan ordered that the veil be removed, the curtain raised, the concealments taken away, the marble carried off, the stones broken, the structures demolished, the covers broken into.

It was a new beginning:

> The Rock was to be brought to light again for visitors and revealed to observers, stripped of its covering and brought forward like a young bride… Before the conquest only a small part of the back of it appeared in all its beauty, revealed in the loveliest revelations. Candelabra gleamed upon it, light on light, and over it was placed an iron grille.

But the Crusader had caused lasting damage:

> The Franks had cut pieces from the Rock, some of which they carried to Constantinople and Sicily and sold, they said, for their weight in gold, making it a source of income. When The Rock reappeared to sight the marks of these cuts were seen and men were incensed to see how it had been mutilated. Now it is on view with the wounds it suffered, preserving

its honor forever, safe for Islam, within its protection and its fence.

A sense of Saladin's intelligence comes through in the records from Imad al-Din. On the discussion on what to do with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, in a city without western Christians and under Islamic rule:

> [Saladin] had the Church of the Resurrection closed to Christian visitors even as a refuge. Many discussions were held with him about its fate. Some advised him to demolish it and abolish all trace of it, making it impossible to visit, removing its statues, driving away its errors, extinguishing it lights, destroying its Testaments, eliminating its false allurements, declaring its affirmations to be lies. “When its buildings are destroyed,” they said, “and it is razed to the ground, and its sepulcher opened and destroyed, and its fires spend and extinguished, and its traces rubbed out and removed, and its soil ploughed up, and the Church scattered far and wide, then the people will cease to visit it, and the longings of those destined for damnation will no longer turn to seeing it, whereas, if it is let standing, the pilgrimage will go on without end.”[49]

Saladin disagreed and sided with the majority who argued:

> Demolishing and destroying it would serve no purpose, nor would it prevent the infidels from visiting it or prevent their having access to it. For it is not the building that appears to the eyes but the home of the Cross of the Sepulcher this is the object of worship. The various Christian races would still be making pilgrimages here even if the earth had been dug up and thrown into the sky.

He also acted with respect for decisions made by a predecessor, the first Caliph: “When Umar, Prince of the Believers, conquered Jerusalem in the early days, of Islam, he confirmed to the Christians the possession of the place, and did not order to demolish the building on it.”

Control of the Holy Sepulcher was finally given to the Greek and Eastern Christians who had remained bystanders in the midst of the conflict. Before his death, Saladin did allow Christian pilgrims to return to the city. The first agreement was between Saladin and the English King Richard the Lionheart in 1192. Jews forbidden entry by the Crusaders began to return and settle in the city, reestablishing their rituals around the walls and gates of the lost Temple. They came at first from the surrounding cities and even further west

from Africa, and over 300 arrived from France and England in 1209. Among the new arrivals was the Spanish poet Yehuda, who thanked Saladin for their return but wrote “this place could well be called ‘the rock of dissensions.’” He described his feelings on looking down on Temple Mount from the Mount of Olives “What torment to see our holy courts converted into an alien temple; we tried to turn our faces away from the great and majestic church (the Dome of the Rock) raised on the site of the ancient tabernacle where once providence had its dwelling.” The memory of the Temple was undiminished.

And there were Jews in Saladin's court. The earliest surviving documented reconstruction of the Temple is in Maimonides' commentary on the Mishna, (on Jewish legal precedence) a work completed in Egypt in 1178, when he was court physician to the victorious Saladin.[50, 51] Maimonides illustrated the second temple, rebuilt after the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar as a replica of the Temple of Solomon.

In 1219 out of fear of the western Christians returning, the Sultan, son of the brother of Saladin tore down the walls of Jerusalem, leaving it utterly vulnerable. The citizens were terrified; the justification was that a defenseless city would have no strategic value to the aggressors.

In 1225, by proxy, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II married Yolande, heiress to the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and thereby became its king. Frederick was also king of Germany, Italy, Burgundy, and Sicily; a brilliant scholar and administrator he was named by a contemporary *stupor mundi*, Wonder of the World. In 1228 he sailed for the Holy Land leading a very fragile Sixth Crusade. Not able to wage war he renegotiated a previous agreement he had intended to broker with the Ayyubid sultan, Al-Kamil, another son of Saladin's brother, and a conciliator who had made several peace offerings to the Crusaders. The treaty, signed in February 1229, resulted in the restitution of the cities of Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem and part of the coast to the Latin Kingdom. The treaty explicitly stated that the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque remain under Muslim control and that the city of Jerusalem continue undefended. To the Crusaders this was a betrayal of their cause; for Islam it dishonored the memory and the victory of Saladin. In March of 1229 Frederick was crowned King of Jerusalem in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.[52]

As written, the treaty was only guaranteed for ten years and there were Crusades in 1239 and 1241, which continued Christianity's tenuous hold on the Latin Kingdom. The city was sacked by forces supportive of the Egyptian Ayyubid sultan in 1244.

The crusading cause and vision persisted throughout the thirteenth century but Islam never again lost Jerusalem. The failure of the Crusades to possess the reality of Jerusalem drove the desire for Christians to recreate the Temple and the city in their imagination.

Notes

[1] Ibn Ishaq *Sirat Rasul Allah*, an early biography of Muhammad. Translated by Edward Rehatsek. London: Royal Asiatic Society.

[2] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 247.

[3] Also *Sunnah* (Arabic: “habitual practice”), the body of traditional social and legal custom and practice of the Muslim community.

[4] From Nasir-i Khusraw *Diary of a Journey through Syria and Palestine*. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 248.

[5] Ibn Ishaq *Sirat Rasul Allah*, 5: Night Journey. http://archive.org/stream/Sirat-lifeOfMuhammadBy-ibnIshaq/SiratIbnIahaqInEnglish_djvu.txt (accessed April 9, 2012).

[6] From al-Muqadasi: *Description of Syria including Palestine*. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 238.

[7] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 249.

[8] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 247.

[9] From Mujir *Histoire de Jerusalem et d'Hebron*. Translated by Henry Sauvaire (1876). Paris: Ernest Laroux. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 216.

[10] All this work was undone by another earthquake in 771 CE, and this time a new Caliph, al Mahdi, ordered it rebuilt and enlarged; the cost was borne by the local administrations.

[11] The throne would have already been within the palace chapel, commissioned before he became emperor. Its form was based on San Vitale in Ravenna. The relation to Solomon may have had a tenuous link to the Dome of the Rock, which even then was thought to have been a

reconstruction of the Temple.

[12] After the city had come under the control of the short-lived Fatimid caliphate.

[13] A. Holtz, *The Holy City*, pp. 122–123.

[14] From Marcus Salzman (Translator, 1924),*The Chronicle of Ahimaaz*. New York: Columbia UP. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 225.

[15] See Chapter 8, page **234**.

[16] Song of Solomon 2: 9.

[17] Exodus Rabbah quoting a certain Rabbi Aha. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 226.

[18] From Mendell Lewittes (Translator, 1957) *The Code of Maimonides: Book Eight. The Book of Temple Service*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 278–279.

[19] Revelation 20: 4–6.

[20] The *Fatimid* claimed to descend from Fatima, daughter of the Prophet, hence the name. Their theology was *Isma'ilite*, a highly theoretical form of Shi'a, which at its most extreme called for the overthrow of existing religious order. They had risen to power in North Africa and then subsequently gained partial control in the Middle East from 909 to 1171 CE. However, they failed to depose the Abbasids as leaders of the Islamic world.

[21] From H. A. R. Gibb (editor and translator, 1932), Ibn al-Qalanisi Continuation*of the Chronicle of Damascus: the Chronicle of the Crusades*, p. 66. London, 1932. In Peters *Jerusalem*, p. 259.

[22] From E. A. Babcock and A. C. Krey (translators, 1943), *William of Tyre, A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea*, pp. 65–67. New York: Columbia University Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 254.

[23] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 254.

[24] In Cairo, his Fatimid capital, his administration so alienated the Muslim community that a decade later he was obliged to seek the support of Christians and Jews.

[25] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 244.

[26] Constantine IX.

[27] Held at Clermont in south-central France. The broad topic of concern was the Peace of God.

[28] Thomas Ashbridge (2004), *The First Crusade—A New History*, pp. 33–36. Oxford University Press.

[29] Extract from Einor Joranson (1949–1950), "The Spurious Letter of Alexius," *American Historical Review* 55, 811–832.

[30] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 285.

[31] From F. Gabrieli (1969)*Arab Historians of the Crusades*, p. 11. Berkeley: University of California Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 286.

[32] Rosalind Hill (editor and translator, 1962) *Gesta Francorum Jherusalem Peregrinantium, The Deeds of the Franks and Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, vol. 3. London: Thomas Nelson.

[33] From S. D. Goitein (1952), from letters in the Cairo *Geniz* in "Contemporary letters on the Capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders," *Journal of Jewish Studies*, 1952, 162–177. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 289,

[34] From *Saewulf: Pilgrimage to Jerusalem and the Holy Land*. Translated by the Lord Bishop of Clifton (1896), Palestinian Pilgrims Text Society Reprint. New York: AMS Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 314–315.

[35] From *Pilgrimage of the Russian Abbot Daniel in the Holy Land*, annotated by C. W. Wilson (1971), Palestinian Pilgrims Text Society Reprint. New York: AMS Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 315–316,

[36] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 314.

[37] Latin architects had several examples of round churches in monastic compounds, the best-known have been the sixth-century church of San Vitale in Ravenna, but there was also Charlemagne's chapel in Aachen, and the church of SS. Sergio and Bacchus, in Constantinople, which predated both the Dome and Santa Sophia.

[38] From *John of Würzburg, Description of the Holy Land*, translated by A. Stewart, annotated by C. W. Wilson (1896), pp. 15–17. Palestinian Pilgrims Text Society 5 Reprint (1971). New York: AMS Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 317

[39] From Abu Al-Hasan al-Harawi, translated by Janine Sourdel-Thomine (1957), *Guide des Lieux de Pelerinage*, pp. 63–64. Damascus: Institute

Francais de Damas. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 318–319.

[40] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 319.

[41] From *Anonymous Pilgrims I–VIII (Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries)*, translated by A. Stewart (1894). Palestinian Pilgrims Text Society 6 Reprint (1971), New York: AMS Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 319–320,

[42] It is described as a Psalter fragment in the National Library of the Netherlands, *Koninklijke Bibliotheek*, The Hague.

[43] From *Theoderich, Description of Holy Places*, translated by A. Stewart. Palestinian Pilgrims Text Society 5 Reprint (1971). New York: AMS Press. In Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 322.

[44] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 323.

[45] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 321.

[46] Near the ruined fortress of Myriocephalon, southeast of where the city of Ankara now stands.

[47] Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 345–346.

[48] Peters, *Jerusalem*, pp. 345–346.

[49] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 353.

[50] Scholarship on the Torah and the Christian Old Testament had a long history, and, by the twelfth century, interpretations were being shared between Jews and Christians; even between the lost lands of the Crusaders and Europe. This and subsequent material on the earliest attempts to describe the Temple are from Helen Rosenau (1979), *Vision of the Temple: The Image of the Temple of Jerusalem in Judaism and Christianity*. London: Oresko Books.

[51] The illustration is from *Mishna Commentary*. Maimonides was the most influential figure in medieval Jewish philosophy and the drawing is believed to be in his own hand.

[52] In the treaty that gave him the title it was stated that the “The sacred precincts of the city, with the Dome of the Rock and al-Masjid al-Aqsa were to remain in Muslim hands”—the Franks had the right to visit.

Chapter 7

Recreating the Temple

The need for Christians to see and feel the reality of Christ's life and death kept the ancient city alive in the imaginations of artists and religious scholars. And as the centuries passed and religious scholarship became more demanding, more and more attention was paid, first, to the biblical descriptions of the Temple then, increasingly, to the evidence on the ground: evidence of divine order.

Christ's confrontation with the moneychangers in the Temple was a subject of significant subject from the earliest days of medieval church decoration, with broad popular appeal as an attack both on privilege and corruption.[1] It is first evident in Giotto's great cycle of paintings in the Cappella degli Scrovegni in Padua, produced between 1304 and 1306.[2] For Giotto, the reality of Jerusalem was medieval Europe. Christ is portrayed entering into a medieval walled Jerusalem and attacking the moneychangers in a courtyard in front of a portico. However, the painting offers a precisely composed emotional presentation of the key elements of the events: with cattle and sheep scattering in the foreground, the disciples on the left are comforting some little children who had been selling doves; on the right, two of the merchants are reeling from Christ's whip, while behind them elderly priests are looking most concerned. Giotto was picturing the scene as described in John. The portico is shown in a manner both classical and gothic: three arches lead to three doorways: the arches forming vaults and supported by engaged columns with Corinthian capitals, all very picturesque, but offering no evidence of Giotto having given any concern to the actual historic setting.

In 1509, two centuries after Giotto, Albrecht Dürer created a series of prints called *The Small Passion*.[3] His print *Christ Driving the Moneylenders from the Temple* is a dense, violent portrayal, with the figure of Christ dominant. One victim is being thrashed on the ground among upturned tables and chair

and, amidst the confusion, a man on the left, clutching a sheep, makes for the door. Again the source would be John. The events take place in vaulted hall, the vaults a mere suggestion springing from massive columns. It is a flattened space, the arched opening and circular window that terminate the scene cancel the depth suggested by the columns, and the candle on the wall has no meaningful scale. Yet the setting in such a vast colonnaded hall suggests it was an interpretation of the Josephus description of Herod's Stoa. Unlike the Giotto work, this was a commercial venture, capitalizing on the popular desire to experience Christ's world. Though they could not be afforded by the very poor, such prints appealed to a broad audience, and images of Christ's Jerusalem attracted an increasingly popular audience, particularly in Protestant northern Europe. Rembrandt essentially copied Dürer's Christ and greatly enlarged the scene of the action, perhaps aided by the Josephus description of the Royal Stoa (Figure 7.1). It does give a powerful sense of the dense and varied action; anxious priests looking on from a distance are superbly captured.

Figure 7.1 *Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple.*

Christ's attack on the moneychangers gained renewed significance in the Catholic Church after the conclusion of the Council of Trent in 1563,[4] which was called to address the abuses within the church that had motivated the Protestant Reformation. Christ's actions were seen as symbolizing a church purified. El Greco painted at least six versions of *Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple*. The second version[5] is among the most developed (Plate 18). It was begun in 1570 while he was in a Rome, where he was an active agent of the Counter-Reformation. The cage of birds and the absence of any large animals in any of the versions suggest that he was guided by the words in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. The composition divides between confusion of the left and an almost empty passage on the right. It is constructed out of some obvious borrowings; the right-hand side is taken directly from Dürer; the grandeur of the stage echoes Raphael's *School of*

Athens, undone by asymmetry and conflicting vanishing points: it is as if all the slow harmony and balance with which Raphael evokes the philosophical ideal had been thrown into chaos. It is highly mannerist work, with Christ a violent spinning figure in the middle, framed by a great arch on his left, along with those suffering his wrath: on the right, a few believers quietly observe the scene, into which group El Greco paints himself, in turban. The structure is not in any sense religious: the action is taking place in the corner of a vast colonnade which continues along the base of the buildings in the distance, and seems to form a great courtyard at the center of which, above Christ's head, is a majestic portico. [6] It has been suggested that the view through the arch is of a renaissance city, perhaps Venice, yet it is plausible to view the architecture of the composition as an interpretation of the Temple precinct as described in Josephus.

A Europeanized Temple is grandly present in two related paintings from the end of the sixteenth century. It is the central figure in Perugino's masterwork from 1492, *Handing Over the Keys* in the Sistine Chapel,[7] where a mixture of apostles and personalities from late fifteenth-century Rome[8] surround St. Peter on his knees before Christ. Christ has spoken and is handing a gold key to Peter. Christ's words were “upon this rock I will build my church,” and this Temple is his church: a careful work of classical architecture, yet in its octagonal form and command of the space around, there is the echo of the Dome of the Rock.

Around 1500, Perugino returned to imagining Temple Mount in his painting *The Marriage of the Virgin*. The Temple is again a classical rendition of the Dome of the Rock, the architecture simpler and more fashionable. In 1504 Perugino's pupil Raphael[9] showed his style in a slightly nuanced variation from his master.[10] His Temple has sixteen sides and a continuous surrounding arcade with the paving radiating out from the center, its effect much closer to the mass of the Dome in Jerusalem.[11] In each painting the image of the Dome symbolized the sacred force at the center of the world: it would have been clear to all that this was a symbol for Solomon's Temple.

In the Imagination of Priests

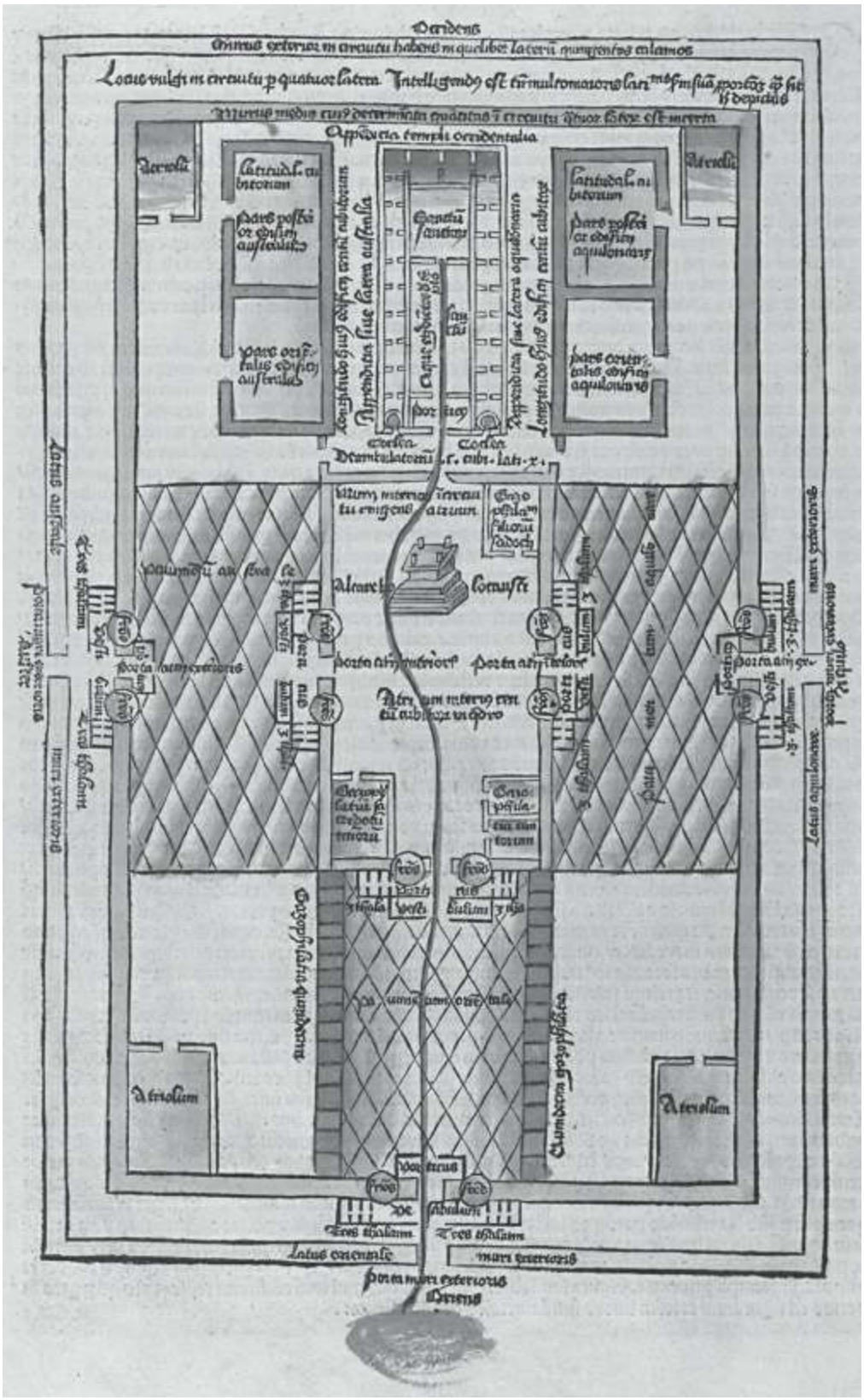
Even before the advent of the printing press, bibles and biblical commentaries were being written and illustrated. These demanded more careful and scholarly translations of Solomon's Temple as defined in the book of Kings and as imagined by Ezekiel, and the Temple in the city of Jerusalem that framed the life and death of Christ. Between the fourteenth and the eighteenth centuries such re-creations exercised the imaginations of a succession of scholar-priests, few in number, but all gifted artists.

Franciscan Nicholas de Lyra's work on the entirety of scripture *Postillae litteralis super totam Bibliam*, completed in the years 1322–31 is the first such commentary on the Bible. It treated rabbinical and Christian interpretations with equal authority and was admired for being plain and useful—an apt description of his recreation of Ezekiel's vision of the Temple.[12] Though the dimensions may a have been biblical, the façade he illustrates is unmistakably Gothic.

De Lyra's manuscript was reproduced several times in the fifteenth century, and the version published by Anton Koberger in 1481 influenced the first fully formed illustrations of the Temple, which appeared in the Latin Estienne Bible from 1540[13] (Figures 1.4 and 1.6). On the title page a note reads “to these are added the designs of the Tabernacle of Moses and the Temple of Solomon…with the utmost skill and accuracy following Franciscus Vatablus.” Vatablus or Vatable was Professor of Hebrew at the College de France, and was the man who restored Hebrew scholarship to France. Vatable's “utmost skill” ensured that every element was in accord with the Hebrew text. The perspectives are all symmetrical and from on high. In the first plate the Temple interior is thrust towards the viewer: roof and facade removed to reveal all: the viewer can peer into the Holy of Holies and see the Ark guarded by the Cherubims, wings reaching from wall to wall (Figure 1.5). In the next plate the view draws back to reveal the Court of Sacrifice surrounded by the cleansing basins, flames rising from the altar; a few figures, some in prayer, populate the Court of the Israelites (Figure 1.6). It is all so clear and exact, nothing overstated, no embellishments. These sacred structures sit on a rocky landscape, barren save for a few trees on the horizon, a place that would at once be understood yet remain distant, and there is no

attempt to represent Jerusalem.

Figure 7.2 Ground Plan of the Temple precincts. From De Lyra's *Postillae litteralis super totam Bibliam* published by Anton Koberger in 1481 The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.



A few decades after Vatable, Peter Laicstain produced an engraving

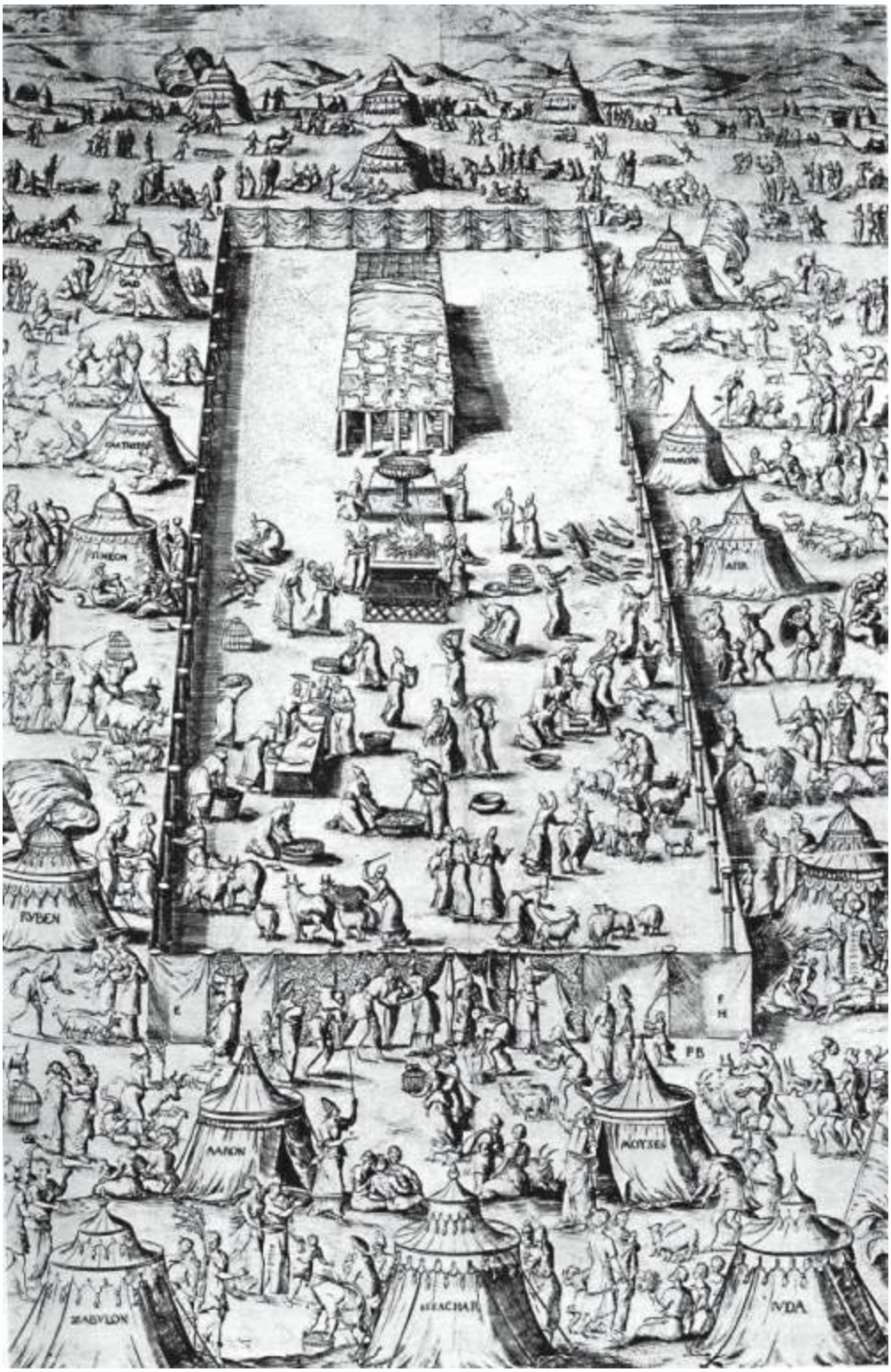
illustrating the crucifixion. This presents an utterly original view of Jerusalem so formed to seem to flow from the mound of Calvary. The scene of the three crucified figures with mourners at Christ's feet dominates the left foreground, and rising behind is the spectacle of Jerusalem, with the Temple holding the center seemingly opposed to the Christ figure. It is the Temple shaped by Ezekiel's vision, undisturbed by any reading of Josephus. All around are vignettes from the city's biblical history, a device that would influence future mapmakers of Jerusalem. Laicstain's bird's-eye view of the city would also influence illustrators for centuries to come. Nothing is known of the source of this illustration, but it was presumably a religious commission. It survives only in a reproduction prepared for the commercial market by the prolific cartographer and publisher Gerard de Jode, from around 1570. There is a clear attribution to Laicstain (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3 Peter Laicstain's engraving illustrating the crucifixion.*Antiquae Urbis Hierosolymorum topographica/delineatio a Petro Lacksteyn primum confecta, nunc vero opera G.I.* [Gerard de Jode]*hac tabula ad vngve depicta 1571*, Ptetrus Laicstain, redrawn by Gerard de Jode, (1509–1591) Antwerp. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.

Also in the 1570s a truly exuberant image of Solomon's Temple appeared in the Antwerp Polyglot Bible,[14] (“polyglot” because it comprised the complete text of the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, ancient Chaldee (Aramaic), and Syriac versions, and in the official Latin translation (the Vulgate)). This was commissioned by King Philip II of Spain from the priest,[15] linguist and biblical scholar Benedictus Arias Montano (1527–1598). The work began to appear in 1572 and ran to eight volumes, several being devoted to critical interpretations of the scripture.[16] Illustrations of the Tabernacle and the Temple appear in Montano's treatise *Exemplar*, volume 8. Church authorities would have scrutinized the drawings and text to ensure they were in every way consistent with religious teaching. The illustration of the Tabernacle is titled *Activities Surrounding the Tabernacle and the Tents of the Twelve Tribes*. The view follows that established by Vatable—on high and

symmetrical (Figure 7.4). The enclosure is set exactly as described in Genesis, with the requisite number of columns supporting the fence, and skins enclosing the Tabernacle. The forecourt is filled with the equipment and the activity of preparing for sacrifice. The tents of the tribes, (there are seventeen) surround the sacred enclosure, and all about is the bustle of maintaining life on the move: there is much concern with animals.

Figure 7.4 *Activities Surrounding the Tabernacle and the Tents of the Twelve Tribes*, Benedictus Arias Montano, *Exemplar*… From *Antwerp Polyglot Bible*, 1572.

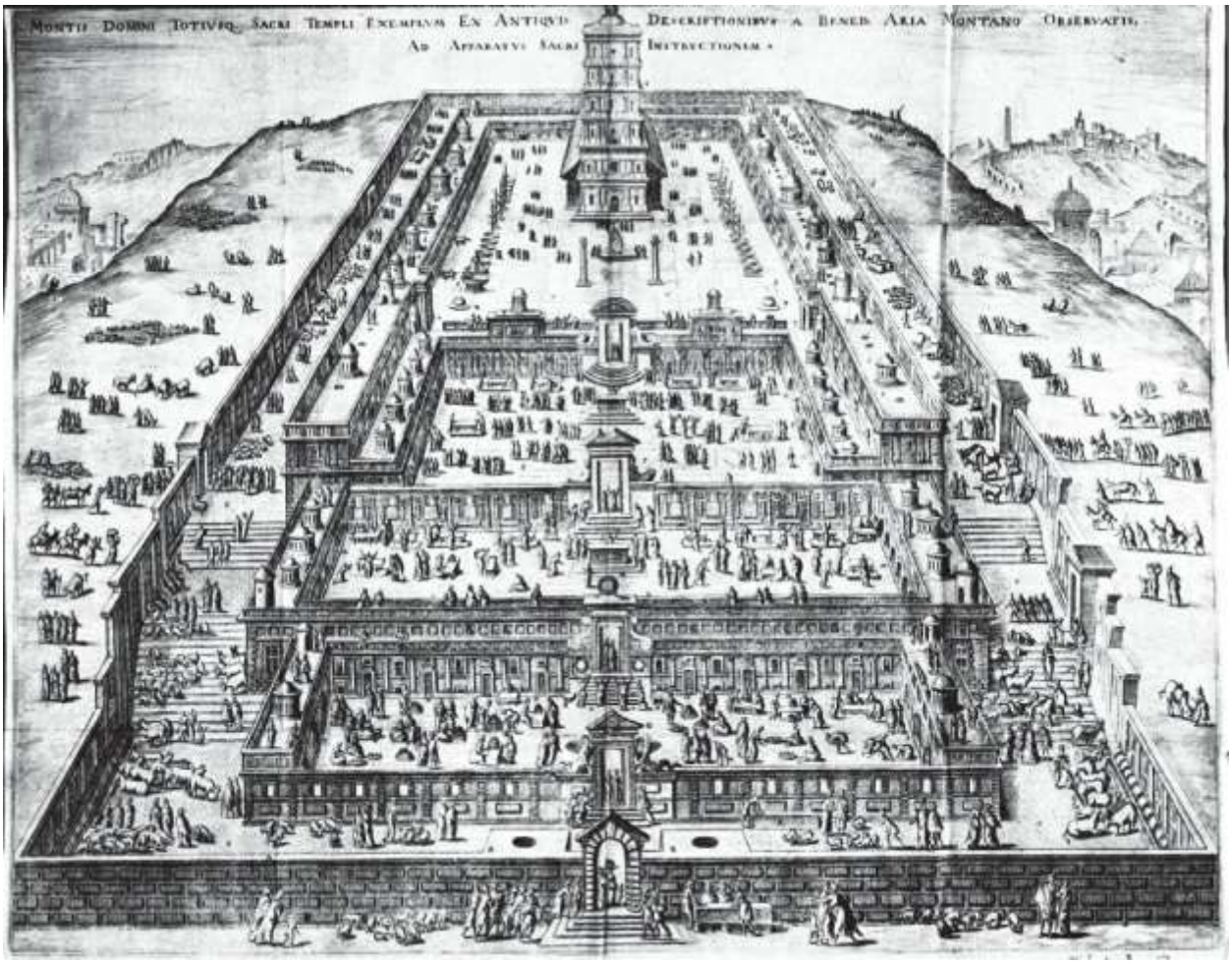


Montano then offers a map and perspective of Jerusalem based completely on Peter Laicstain, minus the crucifixion; the simple plan of Montano's Temple replacing Laicstain's ziggurat.[17] Though the published date of the de

Jode print is 1571 a version must have been available earlier for Montano to have his drawing in print by 1572. Montano appears to have given the Temple the forced perspective of Michelangelo's campidoglio, only recently completed in Rome, thus dramatizing the setting of the Sanctuary.[18]

The heightened viewpoint is identical in both Tabernacle and Temple drawings; unlike the scriptural accuracy of the Tabernacle, Montano chose to dress his Temple in the height of mannerist fashion, reminiscent not only of Michelangelo but of Giulio Romano at the Palazzo del Te (Figure 7.5). In an imaginative act he places symbolic tents of tribes on the roofs of the wings flanking the sanctuary. The façade is a five-storey tower, reminiscent of de Lyra, flanked by the pillars of *Jachin* and *Boaz*. Montano names the court that surrounds the sanctuary *Attrium templi, Magnum sacerdotum* the "most sacred atrium of the temple": in it there are just a few people around the altar for burnt offerings. Adjoined this are three succeeding courts. The innermost, the *Attrium Israelie* the court of the Israelites reserved for males in the center of which is the symbolic "Seat of the King"; many are present—apparently preparing to enter the sacred area; there is some activity over large tables, but no suggestion of animals. Next the *Atrium feminarium*, court of the women, centered on the "Seat of the Pontiff," this is very active with figures in prayer at several altars. This then leads out to the *Prophanium* ("profane" literally "before the temple"), with milling crowds carrying baskets and trays holding the birds and other goods for sacrifice. Surrounding all is a high enclosing wall, outside which are many large animals, none of which enter the inner courts of the Temple. This is not John's version.

Figure 7.5 Montano's view of the Temple. *Montis Domini Totivsq. Sacri Templi Exemplum*, Benedictus Arias Montano *Exemplar* volume 8. From *Antwerp Polyglot Bible*, 1572.



Montano created a much more elaborate construction than the serious yet simple drawings supervised by Vatable and, given the scrutiny of the Church fathers, one must wonder to what end was such a scene created. The plan has a general correspondence with scripture; the perspective, however, would seem to have been conceived to present the Temple as a vital physical presence, as relevant to the sixteenth century as it had been 2500 years earlier. It displays a structure in a fashionable style would have been familiar to the cognoscenti, and is clearly hierarchical, a quality the courts of Spain and the Pope would have approved.

All such publications were major undertakings and in some measure each reflected the religious and political struggles of their time. Calvinism reached Spanish-governed Holland in the 1560s and King Phillip II used the Inquisition to suppress religious dissent. The rebellion that followed led to the Eighty Years' War and the eventual independence of Protestant Holland from Catholic Spain in 1572. Christiaan van Adrichem (1533–1585) was a

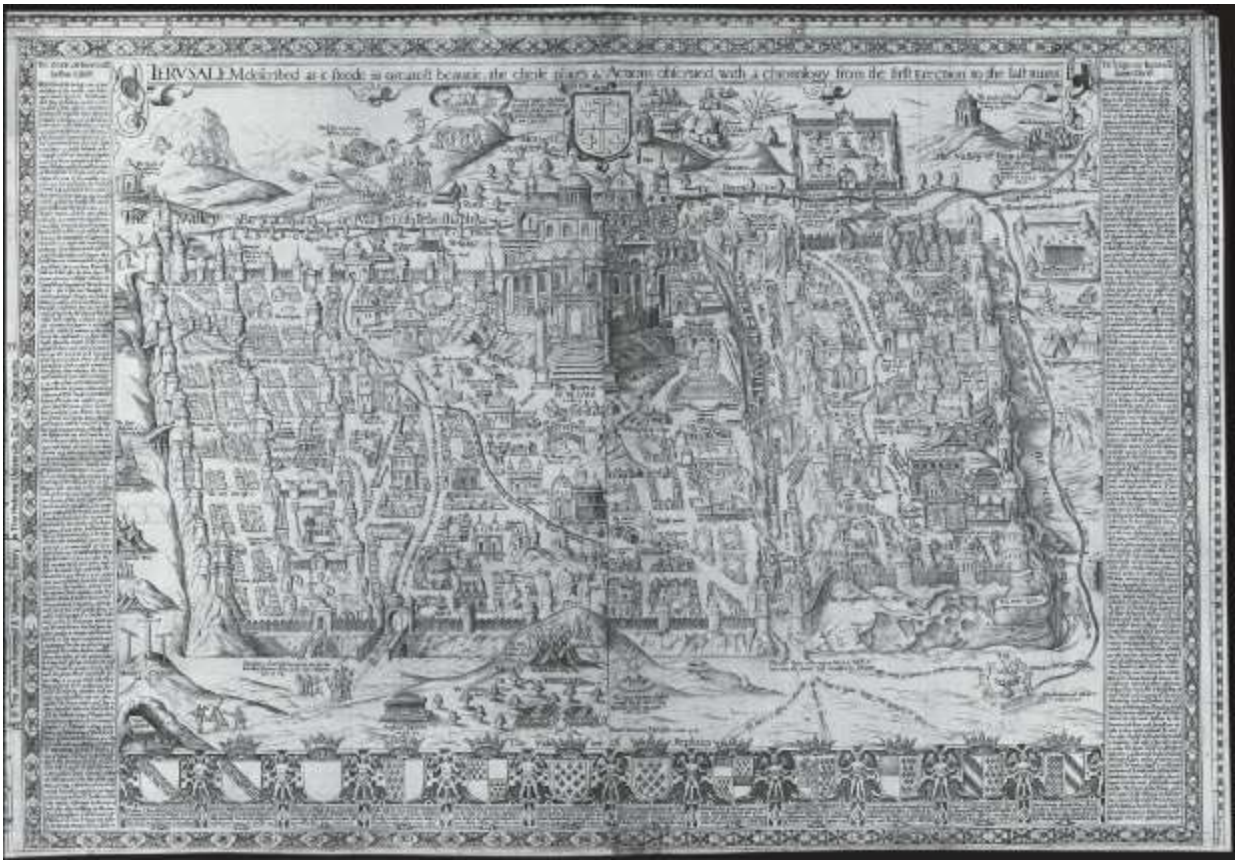
Catholic priest and religious commentator in Holland during these years. His opposition to Calvinism had him expelled from the Convent of St. Barbara in Delft. He published a life of Christ, *Vita Jesu Christi*, in Antwerp in 1578 (six years after publication of the Antwerp Polyglot), and in 1584 published a booklet describing Jerusalem which contained a map entitled *Jerusalem, et suburbia eius, sicut tempore Christi floruit—Jerusalem and surroundings in the time of Christ.*…. This was subsequently reprinted in his *Theatrum Terrae Sanctae et Biblicarum Historiarum*, published posthumously in Cologne in 1590. It was immediately successful.

Though in general terms the map approximates the historic form of Jerusalem, Adrichem never visited the city. What he created was above all a religious document illustrating formative events drawn from the Old and New Testament and possibly the writings of Josephus[19] (Plate 19). He illustrated and numbered 270 such, and did so with a grand sense of architecture. It is Adrichem who is first to place on a map the 14 Stations of the Cross, in locations that remain accepted today, each accompanied by a suitably sad image. Christ's path to the Cross begins in the *Palatium Ponti*, the palace of Pontius Pilate, with scenes of the trial and judgment viewed within the arches. This is the largest structure on the page after the more abstract rendition of the *Templum Dommini* on *Mons Moria*. The *Templum Dommini* is shown as a great rectangular space containing four courtyards one within another. The outer wall above a defensive ramp encloses houses of the priests and faces a wall with towers enclosing the *Atrium Gentium*, the Court of the Gentiles, which in turn faces an equally fortified wall enclosing the *Atrium Iudaerum*, the Court of the Jews. This surrounds the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holy of Holies, open for all to see—the ritual equipment, the table of shew-bread, the Menorah and more, all presided over by the figure of the high priest. In the "Holy of Holies" the Ark lies, guarded by the giant cherubims. The only other activities in and around the temple are scenes from the life of Christ: Christ approaching the city and the Temple from outside the walls, Christ driving the moneychangers out of the Court of the Gentiles. In the Court of the Gentiles Christ also appears with the woman taken in adultery, and in the Court of the Jews he is being stoned, both scenes from John.

An immensely popular document, it was reprinted, reformatted and

amended throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A final version —very close to the original—was produced in Paris in 1856. It was redrawn to sit vertically on the page, and in an English version from early in the seventeenth century the printer replaced Adrichem's abstract Temple with an immense conflation of the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (Figure 7.6). It remained popular in part because it gave a sense of reality to the major events out of which Christianity emerged, and in part because the charm of the tiny drawings allowed people to enter this world in their imagination and believe it.

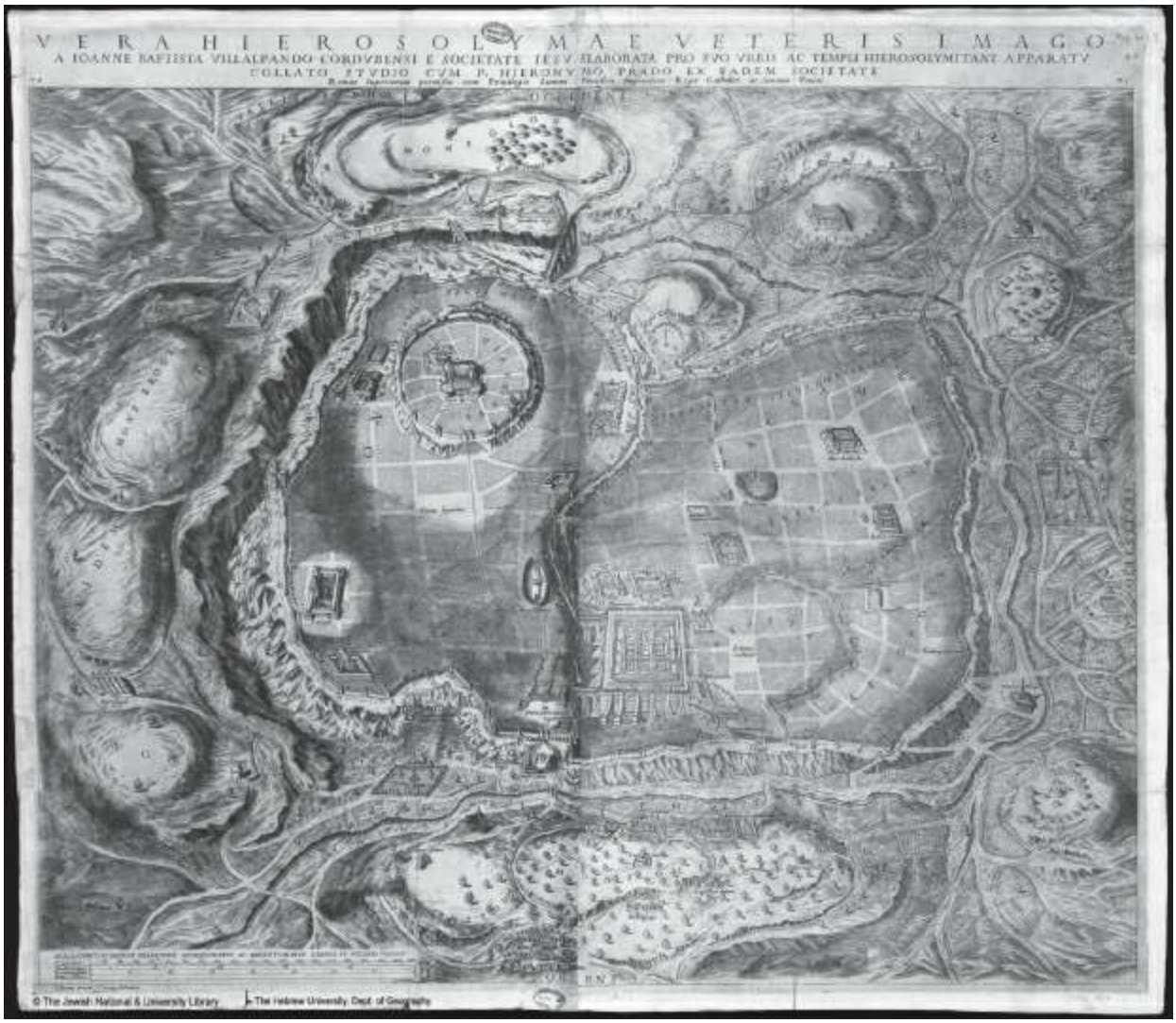
Figure 7.6 *Ierusalem, described as it stoode in greatest beautie the cheife places & Actions obserued with a chronology from the first Erection to the last Ruins*. English: drawn after Christiaan Kruik van Adrichem, from the English edition of *Theatrum terrae sanctae et Biblicarum Historiorum* (Cologne, 1590). The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.



Catholicism responded to a dividing Church by launching a Counter-

Reformation that acknowledged many of the issues that had led to the cry for reform. It also looked in ecclesiastical history for guidance, and found Ezekiel. In saving Judaism and forming a new covenant between God and the people of Israel, Ezekiel was an inspiration. And Ezekiel was the subject of a most compelling product of the Counter-Reformation, *In Ezechielem Explanationes*, a three-volume commentary on the book of Ezekiel by Juan Bautista Villalpando. Born in Cordova in 1552, Villalpando became apprenticed to Juan de Herrera, the architect to the Spanish crown, and in 1575 he entered the Society of Jesus. In 1579 a fellow-Jesuit, Jerome de Prado, began the work on Ezekiel, which Villalpando carried to a conclusion after Prado's death in 1596. In the final volume,[20] *Apparatus urbis ac templi Hierosolymitani—The Organization of the City and Temple of Jerusalem*, Villalpando re-creates *A True Image of Old Jerusalem,… Prepared in Accordance with the Society of Jesus Developed from the City and the Temple in Jerusalem*.[21] (Figure 7.7)

Figure 7.7 *A True Image of Jerusalem.*


VERA HIEROSOLYMAE VETERIS IMAGO
A IOANNE BAPTISTA VILLALPANDO CORDVBENSI E SOCIETATE IESV ELABORATA PRO SVO VIRILI AC TEMPLI HIEROSOLYMITANI APPARATV
COLLATO STVDIO CVM P. HIERONYMO PRADO EX EADEM SOCIETATE
© The Jewish National & University Library
The Hebrew University, Dept. of Geography

For Villalpando, Ezekiel's Temple was the model of a celestial Jerusalem which would arise after the conversion of the Muslims: it would be the stage for the everlasting reign of Christ upon earth. He would have read and reread of the moment, 25 years after the expulsion from Jerusalem,[22] when the hand of the Lord touched Ezekiel and gave him a vision of Israel reborn, with a precise instruction on the form of a new temple. Through 49 verses of Ezekiel 40, 26 verses of 41 and 20 verses of 42, and on and on, the dimension of every room and court is given. From Chapter 41:

> From the ground unto above the door were cherubims and palm trees made, and on the wall of the temple. The altar of wood was three cubits high, and the length thereof two cubits; and the corners thereof, and the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were of wood: and he said unto me,

This is the table that is before the Lord.

Villalpando was a strong architect and a superb draftsman; but in his view God was the architect, he was merely the scribe. The Temple and all its outer buildings were, by necessity formed in the classical orders given by God to the first Temple, embodying both the order of the heavens and the form of man.[23] The aerial view of the city is a significant achievement, a descendant of the maps of Laicstain and Montano. The way it represents the topography and describes specific architectural objects within the idealized topography is utterly convincing. Though inspired by Ezekiel it shares the same history as presented in Montano. He gives form to the City of David, the camps of the Roman generals Pompey and Titus, the palaces of Herod, Pilate and the wife of Constantine, Queen Helena; he also includes the Hippodrome and the Theater of Herod. But the dominant and most original structure is named not for Ezekiel, but *Templum Salamonis*—the Temple of Solomon.

Dominating the center of the map is the platform of the Temple. This rests on a vast and fierce buttressed wall rising far above all else in the city. This is architecture speaking without any justification from Ezekiel, only the belief that a perfect object must exist above reality. Six massive masonry buttresses curve out from the face of the walls on at least three sides of the Temple enclosure, the central four enclosing vast semicircular niches; these are pierced by ramps and bridges from the city. The platform is filled from edge to edge with the Templum Salomonis (Figure 7.8). Villalpando lovingly drew the elevations and sections of all parts of his creation. The wall supporting the temple on the east is more than five times the height of the Temple (Figures 7.9 a, b). As in Ezekiel, the plan of the Temple, with its many courts, is a square. Villalpando interprets the endless measures of space after space in Ezekiel as resulting in a series of criss-crossing structures enclosing nine small squares. Only the Sanctuary rises above its surroundings on the west, breaking the order. On the map there are two inscriptions within the Temple precinct: the continuous outer passage is labeled *Atrium Gentium*, Court of the Gentiles; the *Atrium Israel*—Court of Israel—occupies seven of the nine courts—the court in front of the sanctuary is *Atrium Interiore*–the Interior Place.[24] The length of outer wall enclosing all the ground belonging to the Temple Villalpando has calculated from Ezekiel's “reeds” as 100 by 125 Measures.[25] Although there is power to the structure that supports the Temple

platform, the resulting architecture of the Temple itself—perhaps overextended, yet a predictable work of seventeenth-century palace architecture—conveys none of the metaphysics suggested by the commentaries. Perhaps the canny architect was more interested in suggesting to Philip II the form of a divinely inspired earthly temple, for there is evidence that these drawings had a strong influence on his mentor Juan de Herrera, the architect of Philip's great palace, El Escorial (Figure 7.10).

Figure 7.8 *Plan for the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon as described in Ezekiel.*

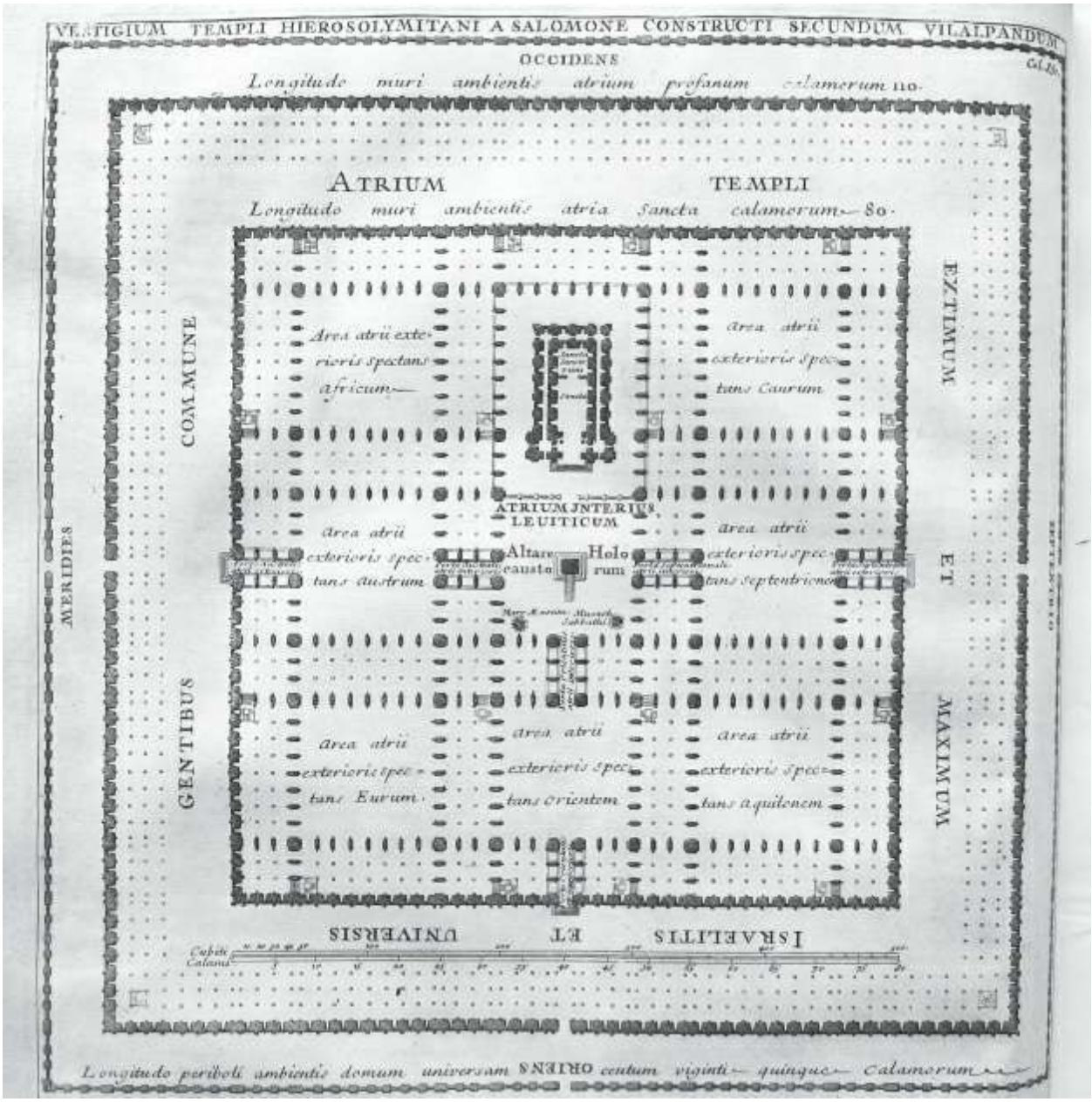
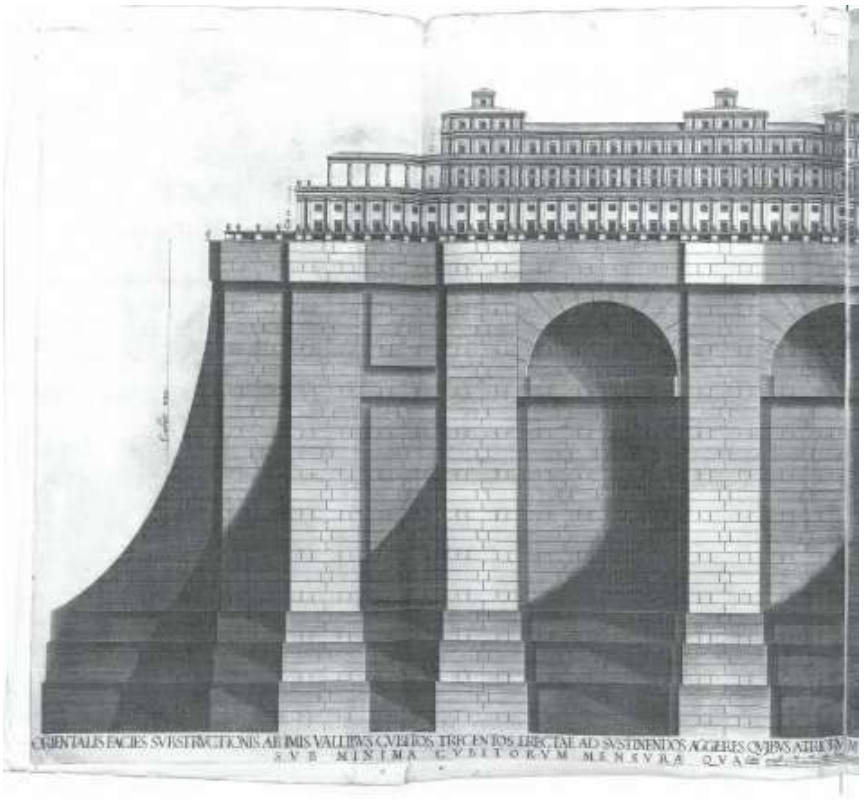
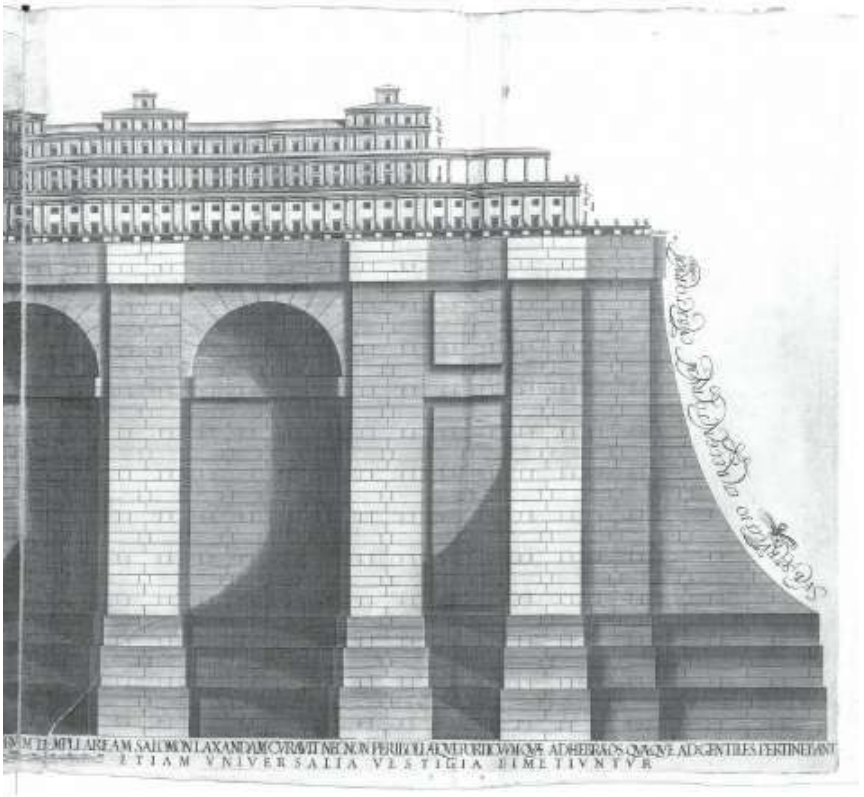


Figure 7.9 (a and b) *East Elevation of the Temple of Solomon and its Supporting Structure as described in Ezekiel*.

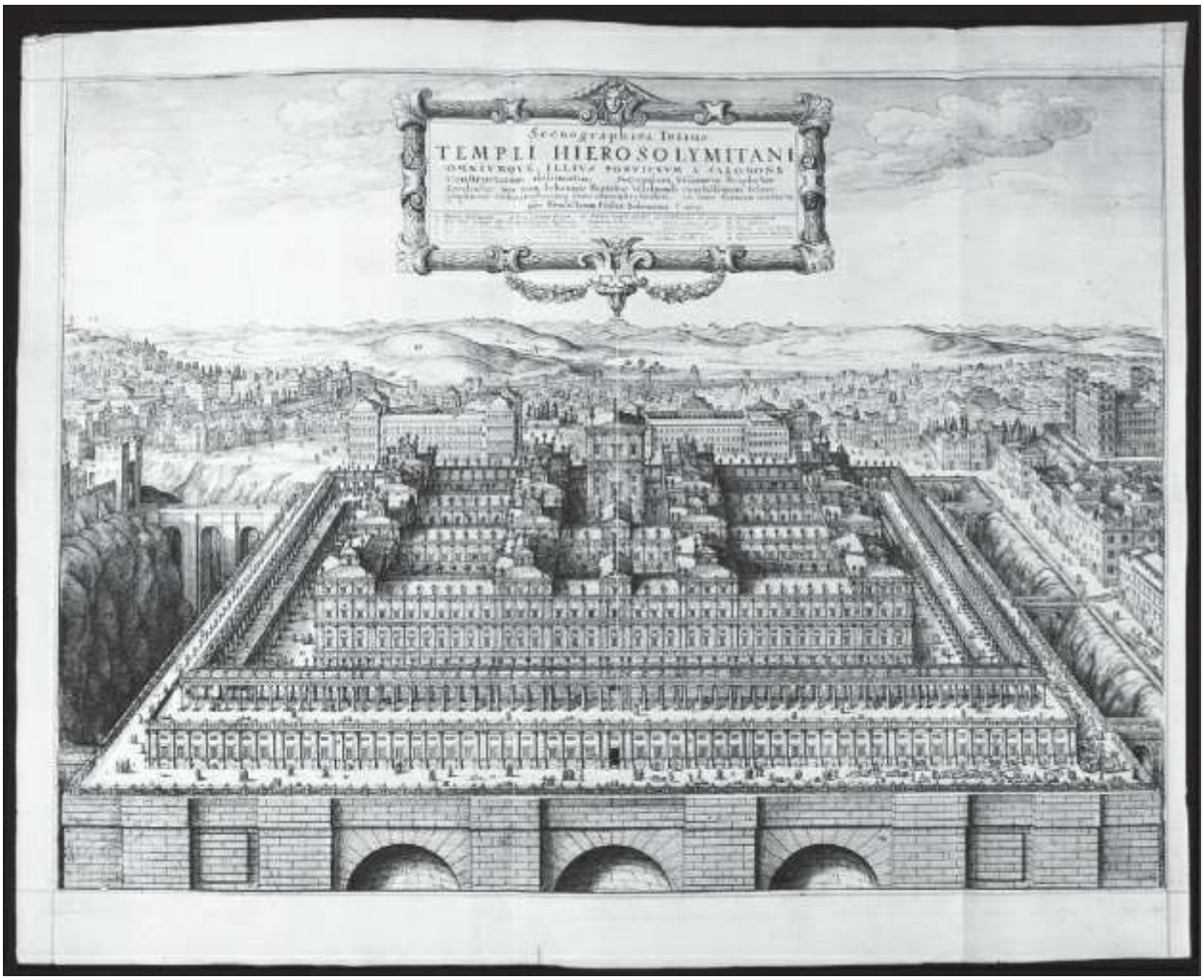

ORIENTALIS FACIES SVBSTRVCTIONIS AB IMIS VALLIBVS CVBITOS TRICENTOS ERECTAE AD SVSTINENDOS AGGERES QVIBVS ATRIVM
SVB MINIMA CVBITORVM MENSVRA QVAE

(a)


TEMPLI AREAM SALOMON LAXANDAM CVRAVIT NE NON PERICVLA EIVS VRBIS VMQVE ADHERENTES QVAE VE GENTILES PERTINENT
ETIAM VNIVERSALIA VESTIGIA TIMETIVNTVR

(b)

Figure 7.10 *Perspective view of Temple of Solomon as described in Ezekiel.*



Philip II paid for the production of the work as he had supported the work of Montano. It was published in Rome in a succession of volumes from 1596 to 1604. When he learned of the project in 1598, the 70-year old Montano vehemently opposed its publication. His complaint was eminently reasonable; what did Ezekiel's overwrought fantasies have to do with Solomon's Temple? Montano was accusing Villalpando of that which he had once been accused —misrepresenting scripture, an accusation serious enough to come to the attention of the Inquisition. The charge was investigated, first by the head of the Jesuit order then by the pope himself, the estimable Sixtus V. A commission was appointed to examine the reasoning behind for Villalpando's depiction, which eventually cleared him, judging his portrayal as consistent with scripture. And for centuries to come Villalpando's drawings, particularly

the structure with which he enclosed Temple Mount, were a major influence on recreation of the Temple

Villalpando's Temple design stayed unchanged, in print and in the public imagination as a dominant vision of the Temple, until the nineteenth century. The map, with its grand view of an ancient Jerusalem, became the favorite of printers and scholars of the Temple, as did perspectives based on it (Figure 7.11). It was re-engraved and reprinted many times and, though the overall map of Jerusalem remained unchanged, Solomon's Temple began to assume simpler form.

Figure 7.11 *Temple of Solomon:* popular broadsheet showing a version of the Temple based on Villalpando. Flemish, seventeenth century.

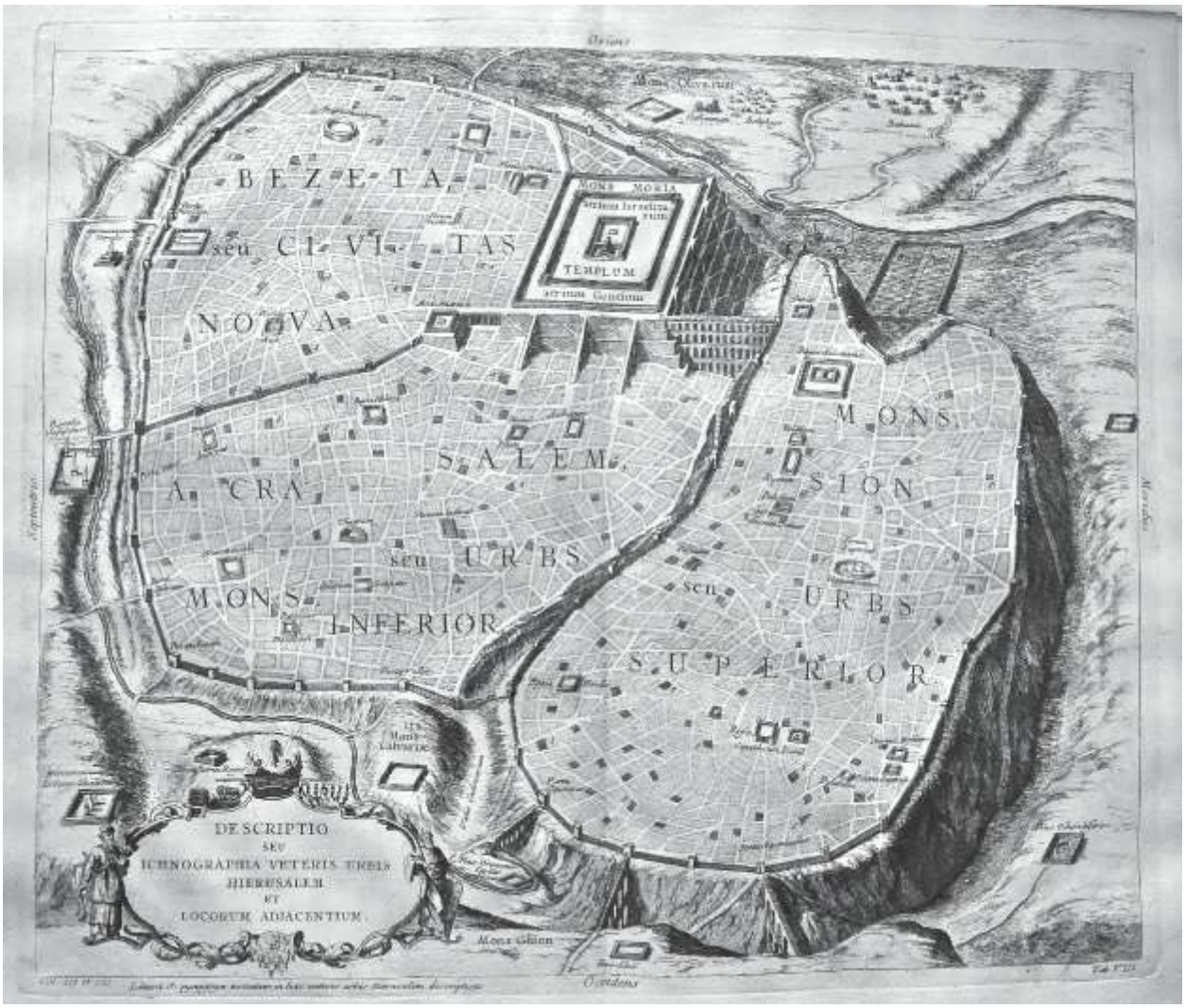
Though not the work of a priest, *Icones Biblicae — Illustrations of scenes from the Bible*—by the engraver of maps and city plans, Matthäus Merian the Elder (1593–1650),[26] was the first publication to broadly popularize an image

of the Temple. Merian's Temple owes more to Montano than to scripture. It is, again, a perspective from a high vantage, though not symmetrical, and where in Montano's view Jerusalem is a vague presence in background, Merian firmly embeds his Temple in the city, yet separated from it by a vast ditch.[27] Merian was skilled in describing architecture, so it is surprising that his rendering of the Sanctuary is so clumsy. First published in 1625, Merian's image increased in popularity after it was reprinted in Nicolas Fontaine's *L'histoire du Vieux et du Nouveau Testament* and used in schools across France.

Its visibility was further increased when it was used, with the people removed, to illustrate the Amsterdam edition of rules for Passover, the Haggadah, in 1695. This work was prepared by a convert to Judaism, Abraham ben Jacob, who also included Adrichem's illustration of Christian holy sites, adding events from Jewish history such as the path of the Exodus with the twelve tribes named.

The most extravagant priestly imagination to consider the form of the Temple was Bernard Lamy, (1640–1715), philosopher, scientist and mathematician, and also a Jesuit. The Catholic Church still view him as an unorthodox thinker, overly critical, and aligned with awkward philosophies. This unorthodoxy is nowhere more evident than in his majestic reconstruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (Figure 7.12). Anointed to the priesthood in 1667 he later assumed the chair in philosophy at the University of Angers, but was removed for being too Cartesian, too concerned with reason. He moved through various posts before settling in Rouen. His writings are extensive and varied,[28] and he brought more than theology to the task for reconstructing the Temple. Among his works are *Traité de méchanique* in 1679, *Traité de la grandeur en général* in 1680, *Les élémens de géometrie* 1685, and *Traité de perspective* in 1701. His vision for the Temple appeared in *De Tabernaculo Foederis, De Sancta Civitate Jerusalem, et De Templo Ejus*[29] (*The Tabernacle of Moses, The Holy City of Jerusalem and the Temple of the Jews*), published posthumously in 1720. It also contained portraits of Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel, the Menorah, the Sanhedrin, the Door of the Temple, all engraved with hard, brilliant precision, conveying his utter confidence in the accuracy of the representation.[30]

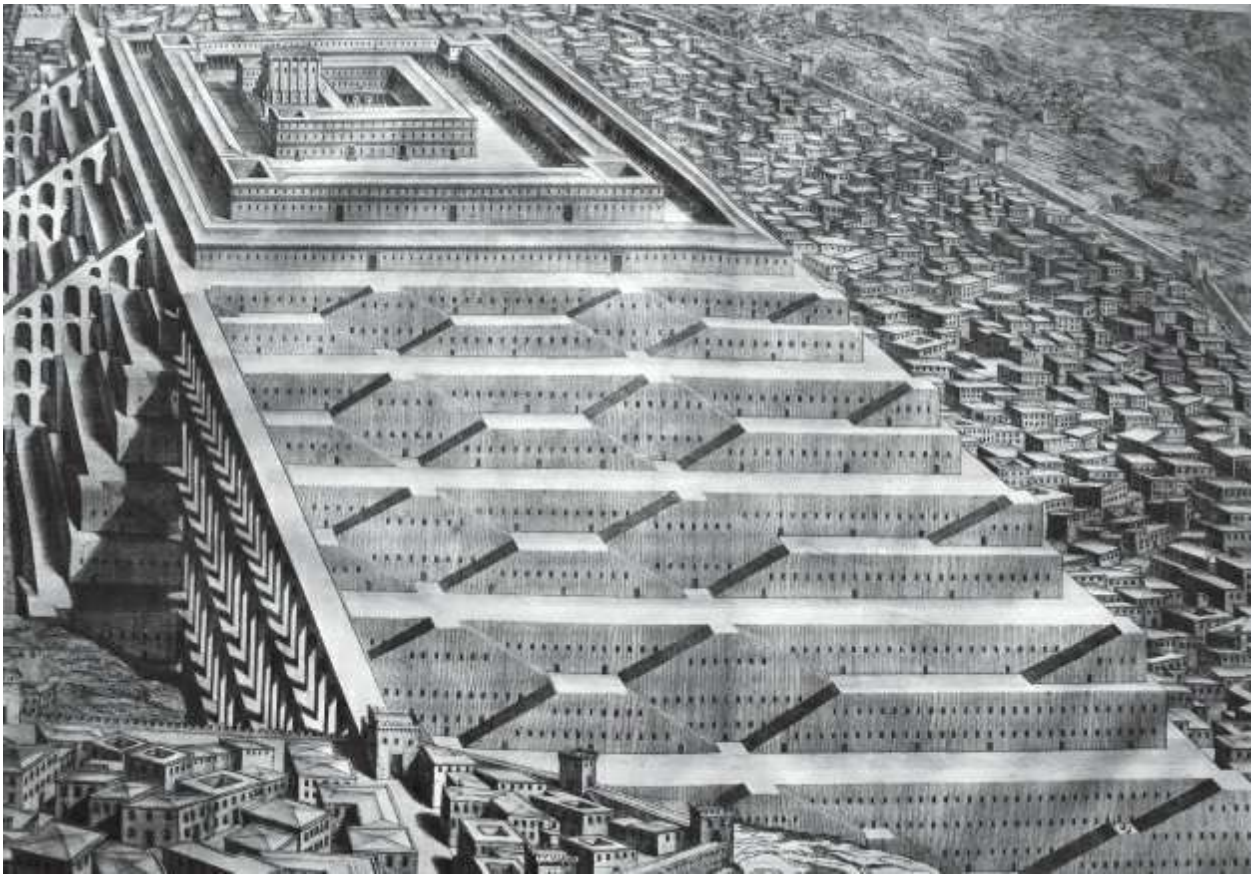
Figure 7.12 Bernard Lamy's reconstruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. *Descriptio seu ichnographia veteris urbis Hierusalem*.



True to his trust in Descartes, Lamy claimed to be a rationalist, distrusting symbolism and allegory, yet respectful of history. Like Villalpando he claimed a scholar's understanding of Hebrew measures to guide his work. Yet his recreation of the Temple is a vast symbol of absurd proportion, without regard to history, conveying a sense of the sublime and of a divine intelligence underlying its creation. (It also seems to anticipate the abstract neoclassicism of architects such as Étienne-Louis Boullée.) The dominant drawing is a perspective of a structure that totally consumes the page (Figure 7.13), a view of a vast pile seen from the southwest. The south face has five ascending platforms formed from massive walls of masonry holding multiple flights of stairs. On the corner a high bridge spans what Lamy assumed was

the Kidron Valley, its multiple arches casting an aggressive shadow at the edge of a western wall creating a confusion of shadows like an Escher drawing. The Temple buildings are almost overwhelmed by the setting. The drama was inspired by Ezekiel:

Figure 7.13 Bernard Lamy's perspective looking toward Temple Mount. *De sancta civitate Jerusalem*, perspective looking toward Temple Mount.

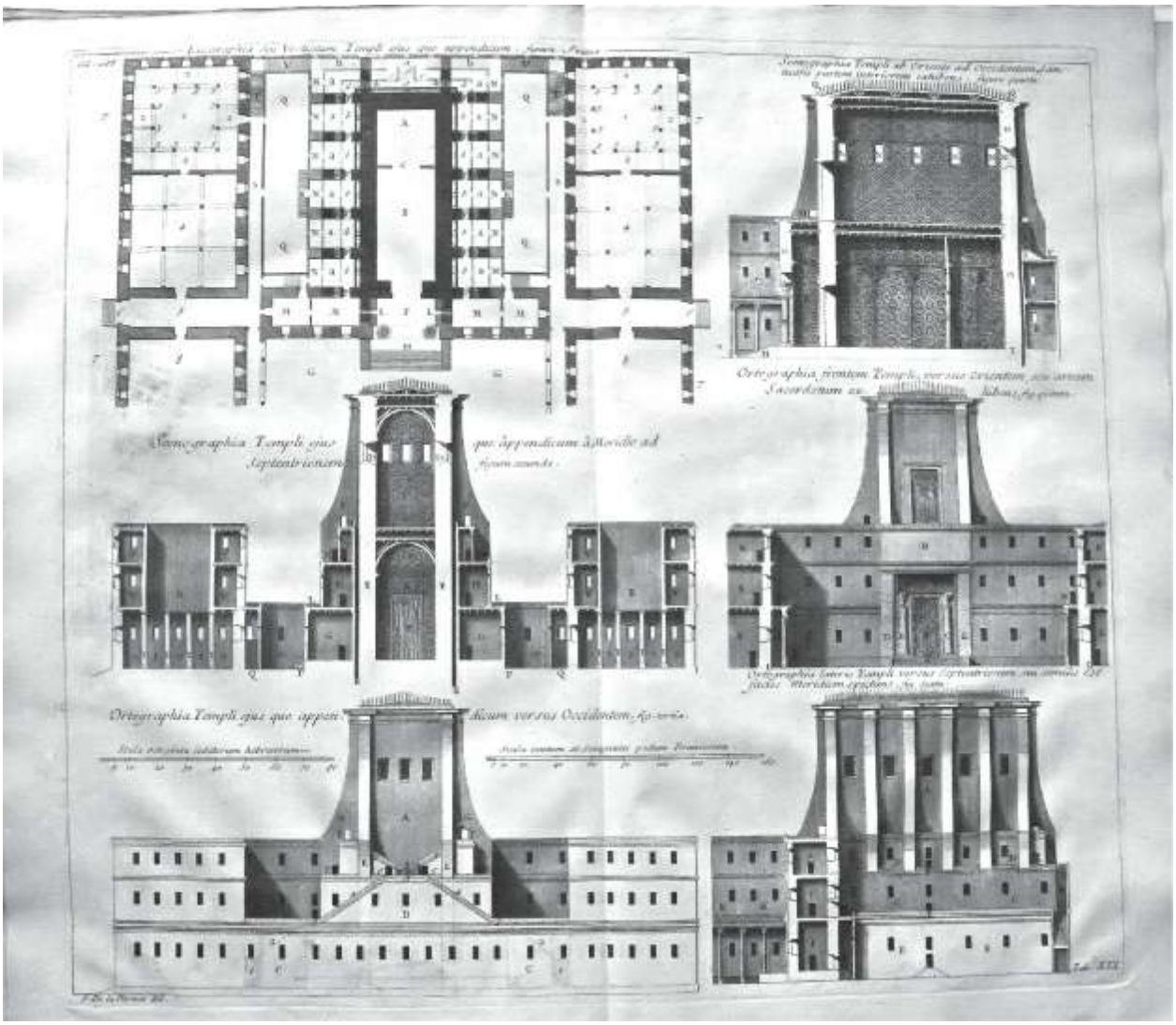


> And there was an enlarging, and a winding about still upward to the side chambers: for the winding about of the house went still upward round about the house: therefore the breadth of the house was still upward, and so increased from the lowest chamber to the highest by the midst.[31]

Sections and elevation of the Temple follow again across two pages (Figure 7.14). They are beautiful drawings of an architecture that is prescient of the most abstract neoclassicism, its details stripped bare; tiny windows are mere punctuations in massive undecorated walls. He is said to have had little respect for Villalpando's proposition, but without that previous act of imagining these drawings would never have been made. Lamy's plan of the

courts and the sanctuary accords with the biblical report. And at the center he gives the architecture of the sanctuary exceptional brooding power: the flanking walls enclosing the massive volume of the Holy of Holies are strengthened by an range of curving buttresses, drawn, it would seem, directly from the walls containing Villalpando's Temple Mount. Presumably, Lamy recognized that the great buttresses were the most original part of an otherwise conventional work and put them to better use. In the same volume Lamy offered his view of the city; here, although the he has reversed the point of view and removed many of the historical vignettes, it is still substantially based on Villalpando.

Figure 7.14 Bernard Lamy's plan, elevations and sections of the Temple. *De Templo Ejus*.



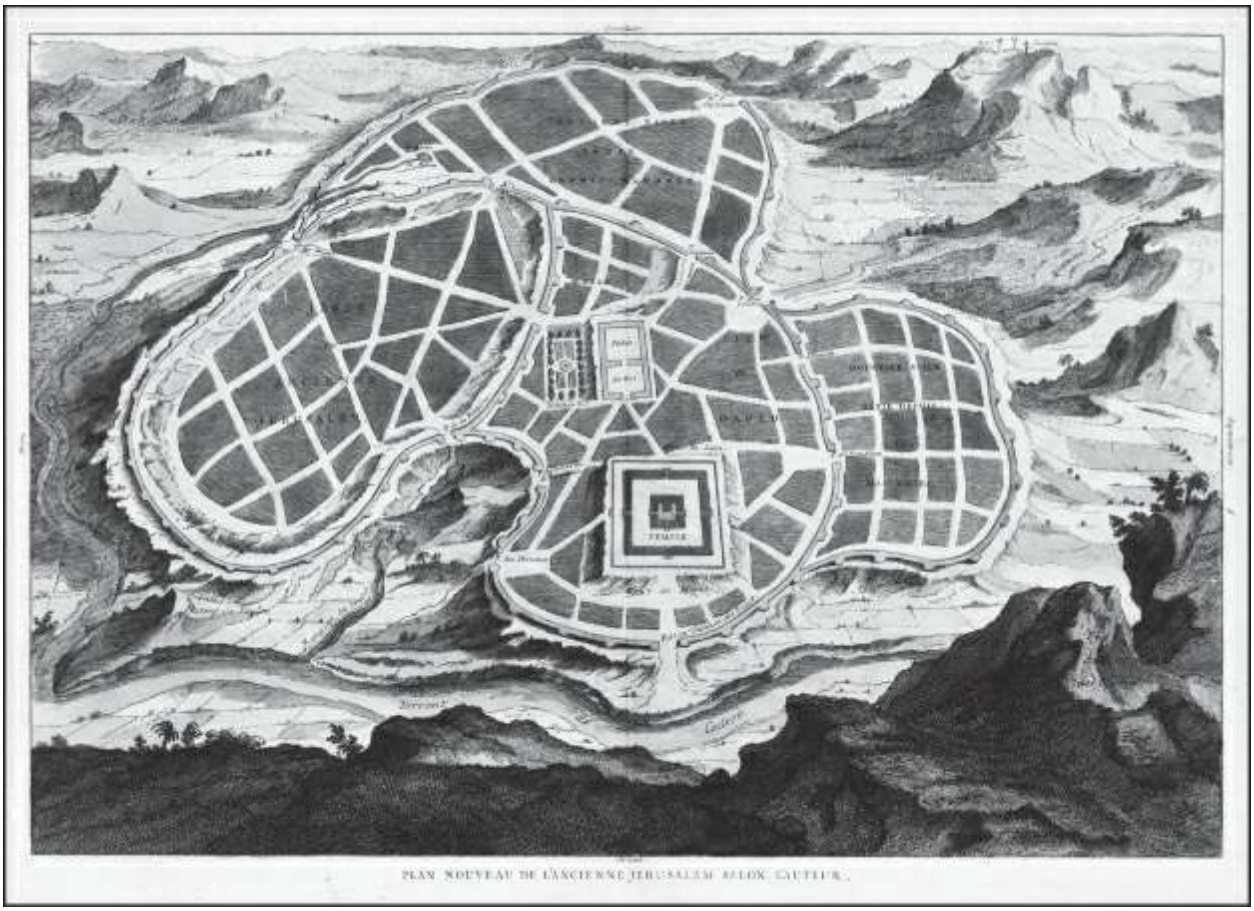
Though little-known now, the power of these drawings is undiminished. They have an intellectual and visual force all but absent in subsequent attempts to envision the Temple. They are the product of a strong original mind able to combine absolute devotion to a faith yet equally convinced by the force of reason. With all the skills and knowledge at his disposal he gave himself the task of confronting a skeptical world with visual evidence of an exact and compelling divine presence—a demonstration that reason and faith could coexist.

A surprising aspect of this examination of these recreations of the Temple is not that many of the authors were priests but that they were such gifted artists. It is also relevant that each successive production was shaped in relation to the religious politics of their time. In 1572 Benedictus Arius Montano, the brilliant linguist and priest, produced and illustrated the Antwerp Polyglot in response to the demands of the Council of Trent for definite translations of the Vulgate. It was paid for by the Spanish king. In 1584, in the midst of political and religious struggles that would see northern Europe separate from Spain and Catholicism, the priest Christiaan van Adrichem produced his immensely popular mapping on to Jerusalem of major scenes from the Bible. These complemented the Vulgate Bible in asserting the reality of Christ's passion as the essential foundation of faith. Twenty years later a second Spaniard, Villalpando, also in the service of Phillip II and a Jesuit, presented commentaries on Ezekiel and recreated the prophet's vision of the Temple as a symbol of a church saved and renewed, despite the rise of Protestantism. And in the late seventeenth century the French Jesuit Bernard Lamy, inspired by the “new science,” created a fantastic yet precise and clinical vision of the Temple and its equipment. This journey from 1572 to 1720 through the imaginations of men who were, in the main, priests, moved from the simple to the extravagant and mythical into an increasingly rational and disciplined world.

These varied recreations of the Temple, framed wholly by the intellectual character of each generation, ended in a cool, utterly unromanticized, display of objectivity and reason in the work of Augustin Calmet (1672–1757). A Benedictine priest and historian, he was a superior in the communities of several abbeys. Though now best remembered for his study of vampirism,[32] he was respected above all for his critical interpretations of biblical texts and,

as with all those that preceded him, in visualizing the Bible. Following the path of Lamy and in keeping with the mood of the times, Calmet applied a new rational method of interpreting biblical texts. He avoided mystical and moral explanations and accepted the literal meaning. In the *Dictionnaire historique…géographique et littéral de la Bible* (Paris 1720, note *littéral*) he prepared two grand plans of Jerusalem: the first is a careful copy of the Villalpando plan (with attribution); the second, for comparison, has the inscription "Plan Nouveau de L'Ancienne Jerusalem Selon L'Auteur"—"A New Plan of Ancient Jerusalem according to the Author"—(Figure 7.15). The differences are instructive: in Calmet's version, gone are all the vignettes of ancient structures real and mythical; there are just two central figures–a royal palace (of unknown association) and the Temple, with the obvious implication that the foundation of Judaism and Christianity rest on a strong monarchy.

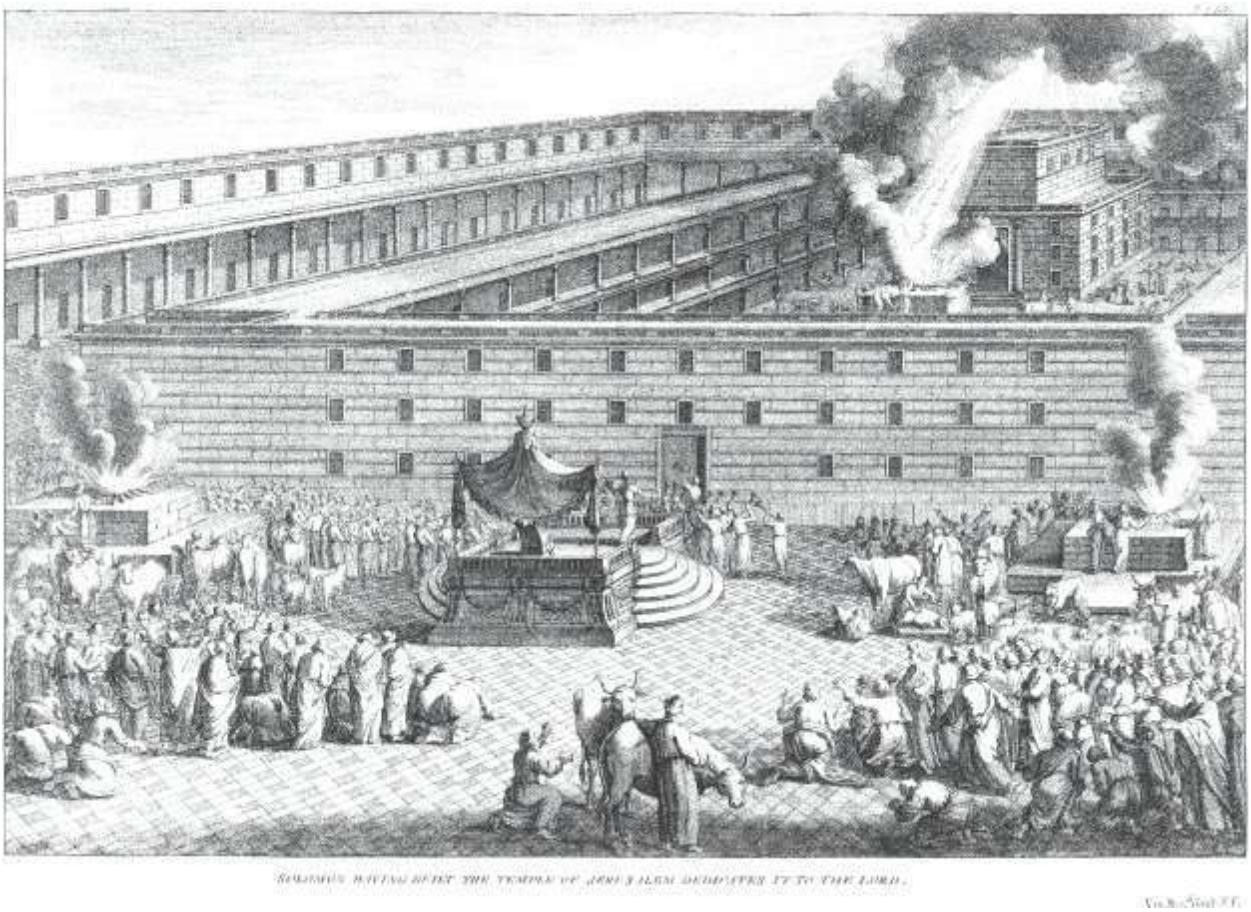
Figure 7.15 Calmet's *New Plan of Ancient Jerusalem. Plan Nouveau de L'Ancienne Jerusalem Selon L'Auteur*. Augustin Calmet (1672–1757) *Dictionnaire historique, critique, chronologique, géographique et littéral de la Bible*. Paris 1720. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.



Then follows a set of drawings presenting the Temple in exacting detail and in action. The aerial perspective repeats the view established by Montano, a view from the east on high and symmetrical. Calmet presents an austere composition, the Sanctuary and its atrium placed at the heart of a tight square of building, all set within a generous Court of the Gentiles. The sanctuary is as simple as in the Estienne Bible produced by Vatable. The architecture is low and even more spare than Lamy, massive walls, unadorned save for two rows of windows enclose both courts. A continuous and disciplined columned gallery encloses both interiors. Calmet illustrates the moment when "Solomon having Built the Temple of Jerusalem Dedicates it to the Lord" (Figure 7.16). Here the view is from the high gallery surrounding the Court of the Gentiles looking into the Court of the Israelites: the architecture, shorn of any decoration, affects purity and honesty. In the foreground is the seat of the king, flanked by burning altars. In the Court of the Israelites Calmet presents "The Grand Hosanna, or Ceremony on the Eighth Day of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Temple," the *Hoshanna Raba* (actually the seventh day) of

the festival Sukkoth; the harvest festival. Garlands of leaves decorate the galleries and the face of the Temple and in the foreground are the huts made from branches. The only part of the scene that would contradict the scripture is the height of the facade of the Temple, Calmet must have concluded that the biblical text was confused and exaggerated. His Sanctuary stands no taller than the surrounding court, and in front of it rise plumes of smoke from the Altar for Burnt Offerings.

Figure 7.16 Calmet: *Solomon Having Built the Temple of Jerusalem Dedicates it to the Lord*. Augustin Calmet (1672–1757) *Dictionnaire historique, critique, chronologique, géographique et littéral de la Bible*. Paris 1720. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.



The Temple in the Popular

Imagination

Bringing the idea and image of the Temple to a popular audience was the work of a very different priest. Desire for it must have been in the air, and no one capitalized on it more than Rabbi Jacob Judah Leon (1602–1675). Such was the widespread fame of his activity that he was known as Leon Templo. Born in Portugal, he fled as an infant with his family to Amsterdam in 1605. The family must have had sufficient resources to establish a presence in Amsterdam society, and they were used to good effect. His friendship with the Dutch poet and statesman Constantijn Huygens gave him entry to Protestant court circles in Holland and later in England. It was the association with the theologian Adam Boreel, (who counted Spinoza within his circle) which led Leon to the Temple. Boreel was a millennialist, believing that Christ would return to create an ideal society, and that the Temple in Jerusalem had to be rebuilt to prepare for this. Together they published a Hebrew edition of the Mishna and from this conceived the idea of building a model of the Temple to popularize the idea of rebuilding. The model was constructed by the Rabbi and financed by Boreel, and in 1642 they produced an explanatory booklet, published first in Spanish as *Retrato del Templo de Selomo— A view of the Temple of Solomon*.[33] This was a great success, reprinted time and again, eventually being produced in French, German, Latin, Hebrew, Yiddish, and English.

Leon Templo quickly established a very successful business marketing the image and exhibiting the model. At first it was shown in his home; he had a sign carrying the image of the Temple above his front door and put up posters carrying the image around Amsterdam. To satisfy ever-expanding curiosity he added a model of the Tabernacle in the desert. In 1646 he took the exhibit on the road, to fairs in The Hague and Haarlem. John Dury, a Scottish theologian who saw it in Holland, wrote that “amongst all the Rarities & Antiquities which are to bee taken notice of there is none to bee compared thereunto.”[34]

The millennarian cause was not limited to Christians; in 1666 the most widespread millennial movement in the history of Judaism climaxed with the career of Shabbetai Tzevi, whose messianic message ignited Jewish communities across the Middle East and Europe. Many Jews in London at the

time of the Great Fire believed the Messiah had arrived—the fire a sign from God. In 1675 Leon took his model to London with letters of introduction from Huygens to among others, Christopher Wren. Wren was interested in the Temple, but did not believe that there was sufficient evidence to establish a divine origin for its architecture—he did however see the model, (and elsewhere said of Villalpando's design “fine romantick Piece, after the Corinthian Order…mere Fancy”[35]). Whatever architectural or millennarian motives Leon may have had for his visit to London, they were cut short by his death in the same year.

The model may have been impressive, but Leon Templo's engravings of the Temple are rough art. The image is, for the most part, taken from Villalpando. Present is the palace on the left, the Antonia on the right and above all the massive buttressed face of Mount Moriah, but it is crudely simplified from the original. It is the art of the street, like a song sheet, a political cartoon, a throwaway image. There is an exactly similar yet superior earlier print, full of careful description and a foreground filled with elegantly drawn activity: it not clear what relation this had to the popular tinted print from the traveling Rabbi. In both prints the major change is to the Temple. In transforming Villalpando's vision of Ezekiel, to a more acceptable image of the Temple of Solomon, the engraver simply takes the central section of the Villalpando design and, with respect to the Jewish tradition and a nod to Josephus, places the Sanctuary and the inner courts at the northern end of the great enclosure. However, Villalpando's grand colonnaded terraces survive to surround all. Other models followed, and the 1695 work of Gerhard Schott can still be seen in Hamburg.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century Villalpando's image of Ezekiel's Temple had become deeply impressed in the European imagination (helped no doubt by Rabbi Leon). The Dutch publisher Pieter Mortier produced the first Dutch edition of the writings of Flavius Josephus, illustrated by the most celebrated engraver of his time, Jan Luyken. Luyken (1649–1712) was an artist and a poet, whose work ranged from love songs to religious prose and whose illustrations were effective popularizers of historical events.[36] In seventeenth-century Europe the histories of Josephus Flavius were read more than any books other than the Bible. In his *Illustrated History of the Old and New Testament* (*Afbeeldingen merkaarddigste Geschiedenissen van het Oude*

en Nieuwe Testament) Luyken's task was to create images that matched and gave life to Josephus' often-vivid descriptions. Though Luyken was illustrating the life and death of the Temples of Solomon he chose to use Villalpando's interpretation of Ezekiel. There is a grand panoramic view of the construction of the Temple. Jerusalem is softly visible in the far distance; there is activity across a great cleared platform and at the center one building nears completion—the Sanctuary. Dominating the foreground is the crest of the containing wall of Villalpando's Temple;

the view appears to be from the Mount of Olives (also much engaged in the construction) with the mass hidden from view (Figure 7.17). Next is a close up of the work site: a procession of heavy, horse-drawn carts are carrying massive stones through the unfinished wall up on to the platform, while others return empty. In the background the Sanctuary is almost complete, and ranges of other buildings can be seen rising around it. And Luyken, in a spectacular engraving, presents the Romans in violent action, destroying the Temple; the most direct references to Josephus are the collapsed columns of the colonnade in the foreground (Figure 7.18). Many other illustrators, such as J. C. Scheuchzer in his *Physica Sacra*, also used the Villalpando designs and the increasing omnipresence of this Spanish vision of sacred power must have increased the irritation of its detractors.

Figure 7.17 *The Temple Under Construction*. Jan Luyken (1649–1712). Author's collection.

Figure 7.18 *The Romans Destroy the Temple* Jan Luyken (1649–1712).

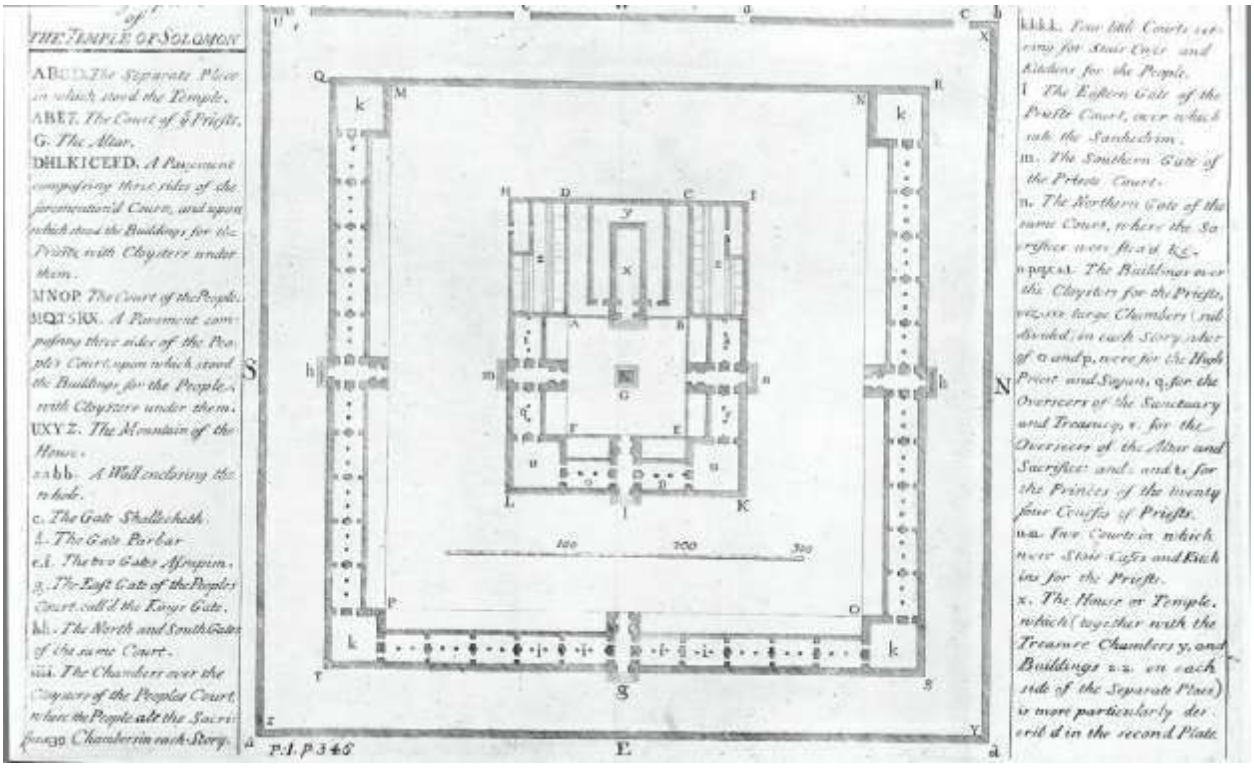
Author's collection.

It is of note that there was no equivalent in the Protestant north to the intense and scholarly concern in the Catholic Church with the actual form of the Temple, until the issue was taken by the most exceptional scholar of the his age, Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). Physicist, mathematician, and theologian, Newton wrote more on religion than he did on natural science. His interests in the Temple were religious, scientific and political. He saw God as the master creator whose existence could not be denied in the face of the grandeur of all creation. Rather than an interventionist God, he believed in a world shaped by universal, rational yet divine principles. As early as 1689 he had embarked on what he considered one of his most important works, a study of ancient monarchies. In *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* (published posthumously in 1728) he attempted to establish the origins of the institution of kingship as well as the primacy of Israel over other cultures of antiquity. According to Newton, ancient Judaism had been a repository of divine knowledge, which had subsequently been diluted, corrupted and largely lost. Some of it had filtered down to Pythagoras, whose “music of the spheres” he regarded as a metaphor for the law of gravity. He set out to uncover further “correspondences” or correlations between music and architecture. Between his account of the empires of the Babylonians and the Medes and that of the Persians, he

inserted “A Description of the Temple of Solomon.”

In Newton's exposition of the book of Revelation, the Temple was the setting for the unveiling of prophecy.[37] His knowledge of it would have been enhanced by the commentary in the prologue to the London Polyglot Bible, which Newton owned, and which contained illustration of the Temple by Wenceslaus Hollar,[38] (based directly on Villalpando). Though impressed by Ezekiel's vision, Newton reconstructed the Temple from the evidence in the books of Kings and Chronicles.[39] Three drawings survive; all are plans. Two are most representative: first a sketch with notes, and second a carefully drawn version of the same, with notes on the side margins (Figure 7.19). They appear to be modeled on the Calmet reconstruction of Solomon's work. The mass of the outer enclosure, the galleries surrounding the Court of the Gentiles, the proportion of the dense cluster of buildings that form the Sanctuary, are all similar to the Calmet reconstruction. In relation to Newton's higher mission of determining a divine order, apart from wrestling with the correct size of the ancient cubit, this is nowhere evident either in the unromantic drawings or in the practical companion notes. The obvious conclusion is that this brilliant mind came, looked closely, and found nothing.

Figure 7.19 Newton's reconstruction of the Temple. *Transcription of the Temple of Solomon: The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms*, Sir Isaac Newton. London, 1728.



In the same years as Newton was trying to understand the Temple it was also of keen interest to the most influential Austrian architect of the Baroque period, Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723). The favorite of Emperor Joseph I, he had to work hard to get the attention of his successor Charles VI. He did this in 1712 by dedicating the manuscript of a history of architecture to Charles, which led to a most extravagant commission, the Karlskirche in Vienna, begun 1715.[40] A design in which he claimed to have harmonized the principal elements of the major religious structures of Western history, including the Temple of Solomon.[41] The presence of the Temple is still clearly visible in the great columns that guard the entry, echoes of Jachin and Boaz.

The history was published in 1721, entitled *Entwurf einer historischen Architektur–Plan of Civil and Historical Architecture*—and was immediately successful. Its three sections contain representations of important buildings of the past, beginning with the “seven world miracles.” In the fourth section he unashamedly presented own work. The work can be considered as the first history of world architecture, but it is a highly selective view of the world, primarily designed to satisfy the imagination and the ambition of the emperor. Among the “seven world miracles” is the *Prospect des Tempels*

Salomonis. It is acknowledged on the engraving to be the vision of the prophet Ezekiel from the work of Villalpando. The prospect, a copy of Villalpando, has been redrawn by Fischer in altered perspective, and is a potent image. The perspective is dominated by the massive walls supporting the Temple platform: less elegant but more aggressive than the source. And Fischer resolved the dominance of Villalpando's Temple over Jerusalem by placing it in a vast pit carved out of the earth with a succession of bridges linking it to the surrounding city (as had Merian). The drawing offers a panoramic view of the terraced court surrounding the inner sanctuaries, where large groups are promenading without any particular intent. The image is devoid of the sacred; it presents the Temple as the center of aggressive power, separated from the ordinary. In that sense both Fischer's and Villalpando's intentions were exactly the same: to offer their rulers vision of temporal power masked by the allusion of a divine origin. Such plays were all the more deceptive because they were made in good faith.

Throughout the eighteenth century the drawings of Adrichem, Villalpando, Merian, Lamy, and Calmet were frequently reprinted and often amended. They were reproduced in England, Holland, and Germany, occasionally France, but never in Italy, such was the power of the church. Such imagery appealed increasingly to the independence of a Protestant and secular audience. And reformed to entertain: for example, Sayers' popularized version of Adrichem for the English market in 1770 is given as *Villalpando's Temple*.[42] And though his vast palace of nine courts is frequently altered or replaced, the composition of his city map and the massive base he gave the Temple are reproduced time and time again. By century's end, Villalpando's creation is firmly established in the European cultural imagination. In 1793 an exact replica of the original drawings from 1604 was made for the English market. An English version of the Villalpando plan was printed again in 1821, a Spanish variation in 1825, and, in 1846, Nathaniel Currier (before Ives was a partner) offered for his American audience a spectacular lithograph titled *The Temple of Solomon*;[43] it was in every line an exact copy of Villalpando. In 1868 a publisher in Hamburg produced a print illustrating Christian Schott's model of the Villalpando's Temple from 1694. However, by then demand for images of the Temple was fading, replaced by a flourishing trade in maps of the actual city. This was a reflection of the

exceptional refinement in map engraving and printing during these years, and the sizeable rise in foreign settlements in Palestine.

Return to Mount Moriah

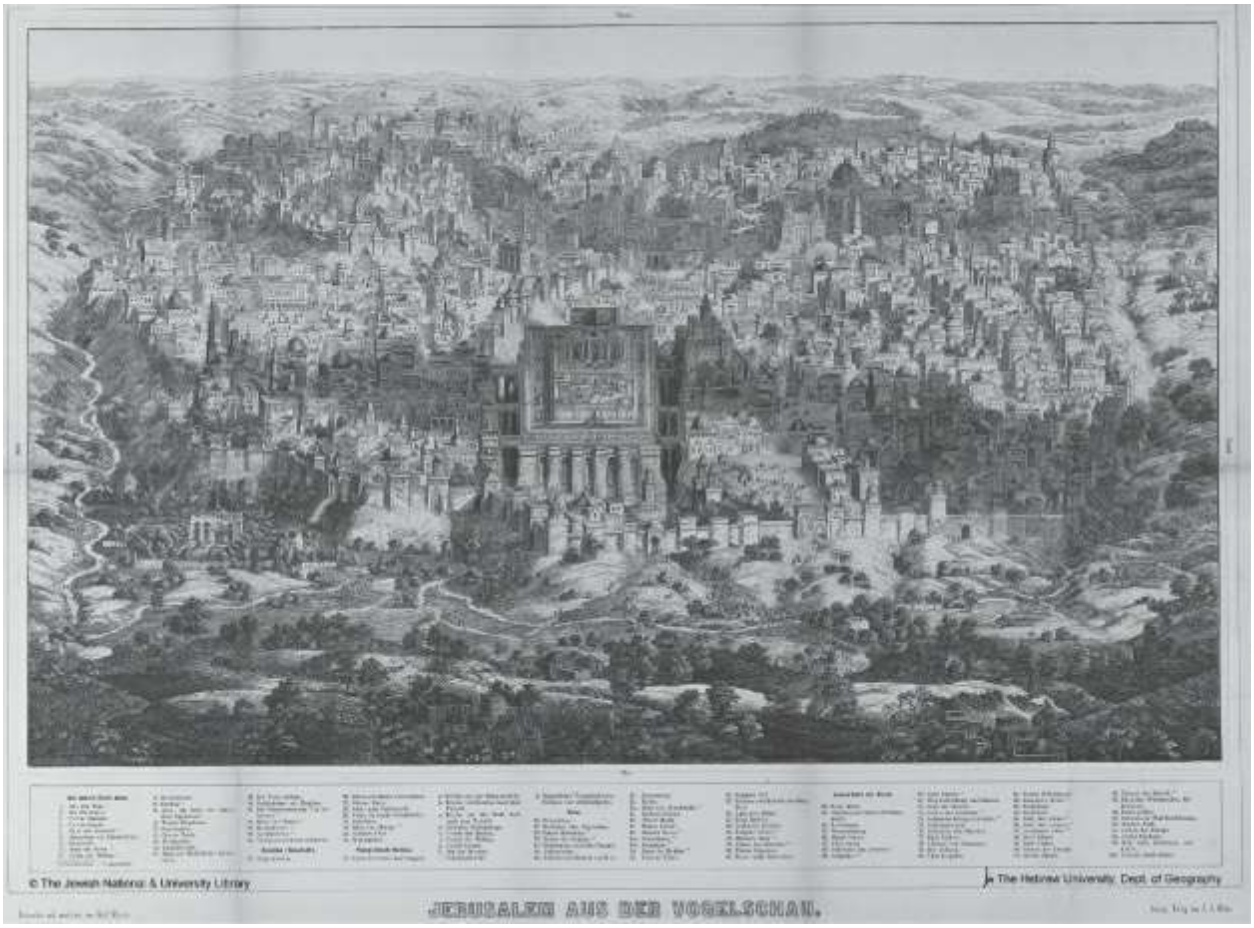
The intense scholarly interest in the Temple at the end of the seventeenth century was never repeated. Beginning around 1750, published descriptions of Jerusalem shifted from recreations of the ancient city to increasingly careful mapping of the actual city. Though there was a decline in intellectual engagement there was no lack of popular curiosity. The most original work from the period came in 1735, from an engraver in Augsburg, Johann Daniel Herz, titled simply *Jerusalem* (Figure 7.20). It is a dense, massively detailed illustration of a city teaming with people. Its underlying character and composition is based on the attraction of the Adrichem map. A brilliant piece of imagining, every one of the hundreds of structures that form his city is given exquisite architectural detail. The thousands who crowd the streets and roofs are beautifully drawn, acting out scenes from all ages of the city. The Jews make their sacrifices, the Romans fight in the amphitheater, crowds cheer Christ's entry into the city, and many watch as Pilate passes judgment, and grieve at the sight of the crucifixion. There, in far distance, He can be seen rising from the dead. It must have become an object of continual stimulation, not only because of the amount of information it contains but also because of the strange and compelling mood it conveys. One can still become lost in its world.

Figure 7.20 Herz's Jerusalem. *Johann Daniel Herz Senior invent. delin. sculpsit et excudit Augustae vindelicor* (c. 1735). The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography —Historic Cities Research Project.

Like a climacteric, picturing the Temple for the popular imagination ends in mid nineteenth century with a final spectacular production *Das biblische Jerusalem aus der Vogelschau*, published in Leipzig in 1847 and reprinted as *A Bird's Eye View of Ancient Jerusalem, Embracing a Minute Representation of this Sacred City* in Boston in 1853, in the pages of *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion*.[44] It was the work of Adolf Eltzner, (1816–1891), well known for aerial views of German cities (best known for a highly detailed panorama of Leipzig). Though in detail it is wholly different in effect, it must have been inspired by the Jerusalem engraving from Johann Daniel Herz. It has the same bird's-eye view and a moodiness that comes from a city bathed in the light and shade of passing clouds (Figure 7.21). The composition makes the viewer feel in possession of the city, and dominating the center is the bulk of Villalpando's buttressed wall, its mass cut into the surface of the city, with a succession of bridges linking the Temple to the streets around. The Temple is an indistinct affair that owes little to scholarship and, though the overall effect is impressive, there is little pleasure in the detail. Eltzner offers unremarkable representations of the major sites from the Bible with none of the skill of Hertz, and no pleasure in the actions

of the desultory figures wandering through the streets. Jerusalem is pictured with all the multiple domes and arabesque arches of the Ottoman city.

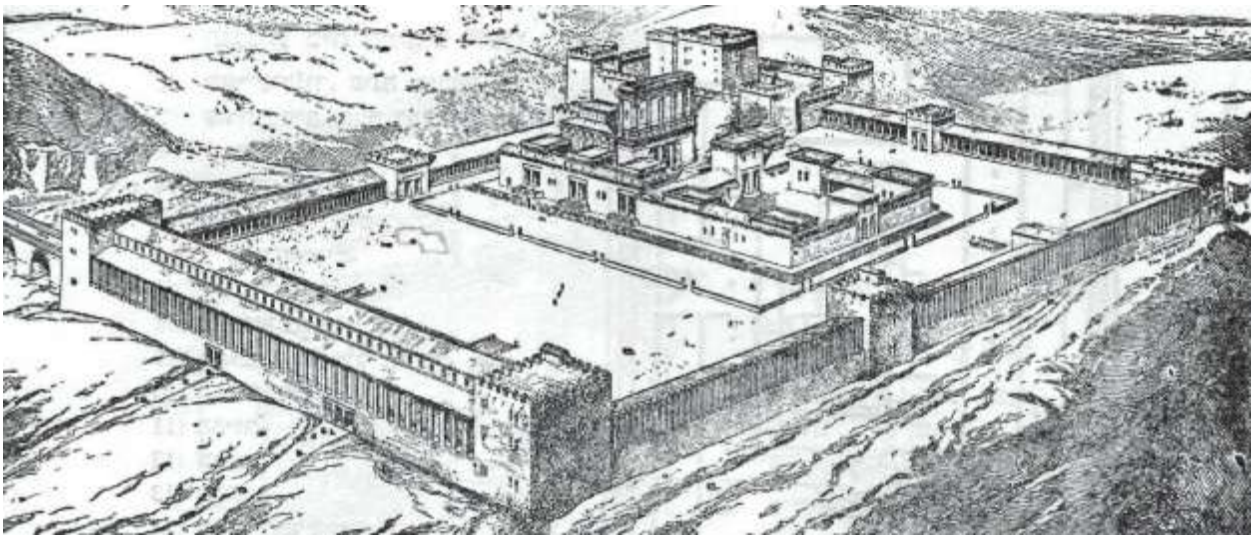
Figure 7.21 *A Bird's Eye View of Jerusalem, Embracing a Minute Representation of this Sacred City*. A reprint of *Das biblische Jerusalem aus der Vogelschau Entworfen und gezeichnet* von Adolf Eltzner. Druck von F.A. Brockhaus in Leipzig 1847.



In 1862 Marquis Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé (1829–1916), arrived in Palestine, marking the beginning of a new period of Temple scholarship, in which reconstructions were created by people, often amateur archeologists and historians, who had visited Jerusalem and had touched the actual stones of Temple Mount. Vogüé belonged to an ancient aristocratic family whose ancestors had fought in the Third Crusade. He began in diplomatic service, but after visiting the Middle East resigned to devote himself to the study of Crusader Churches, a task to which he brought not only a militant Catholicism, but the discipline of a mathematician and scholar of biblical

languages. This resulted in the publication of *Les églises de la Terre Sainte* in 1860. The same intelligence informed the later work, *Le Temple de Jérusalem: monographie du Haram-ech-Chérif*[45] (*The Temple of Jerusalem: Monograph of al-Haram al-Sharif*), published in Paris in 1864. In this he offered a most careful and precise representation of the Temple (Figure 7.22). He, with colleagues, had made the surveys and produced the drawings for the book on Crusader churches so he had ample experience of illustration. He pictures the Temple in a bird's-eye view from the southeast; it is Herod's Temple, carefully reconstructed from Josephus and from the evidence of the surviving walls and passages through which he would have been guided by the first archeologists. The Royal Stoa overwhelms the southern wall, and for the first time the Hulda Gates are represented accurately. Enough was just visible above the ground for Vogüé to have run his hands over the stones. Evidence of his thoroughness can be seen in the appearance of the two entries at the northern end of the eastern wall; here he attempted to deal with the ambiguous remains of what was once the Beautiful Gate. He illustrates the upper sections of all the surrounding walls with pilasters drawn from the citadel in Aleppo, both gates and pilasters appear here for the first time. This is a new kind of scholarship, each column of the vast cloister has been included and the exits from the south entries on to the Court of Gentiles are clearly visible as are all the steps, screen walls, doors to the courts of the males and females that surround the sanctuary—all exactly drawn from Josephus. Little in recent scholarship would contest the form he gave the great portal of the Sanctuary. In this drawing, knowing audiences in Paris, London and beyond, would for the first time, have exact unembellished evidence of the appearance of the Temple before its destruction by Titus. They would want to know more—they would want to know how much remained hidden between the surface of the Haram. This was a powerful even dangerous, document.

Figure 7.22 *The Temple of Jerusalem*. Marquis Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem: monographie du Haram-ech-Chérif, suivie d'un essai sur la topographie de la Ville-sainte*. Paris, 1864.

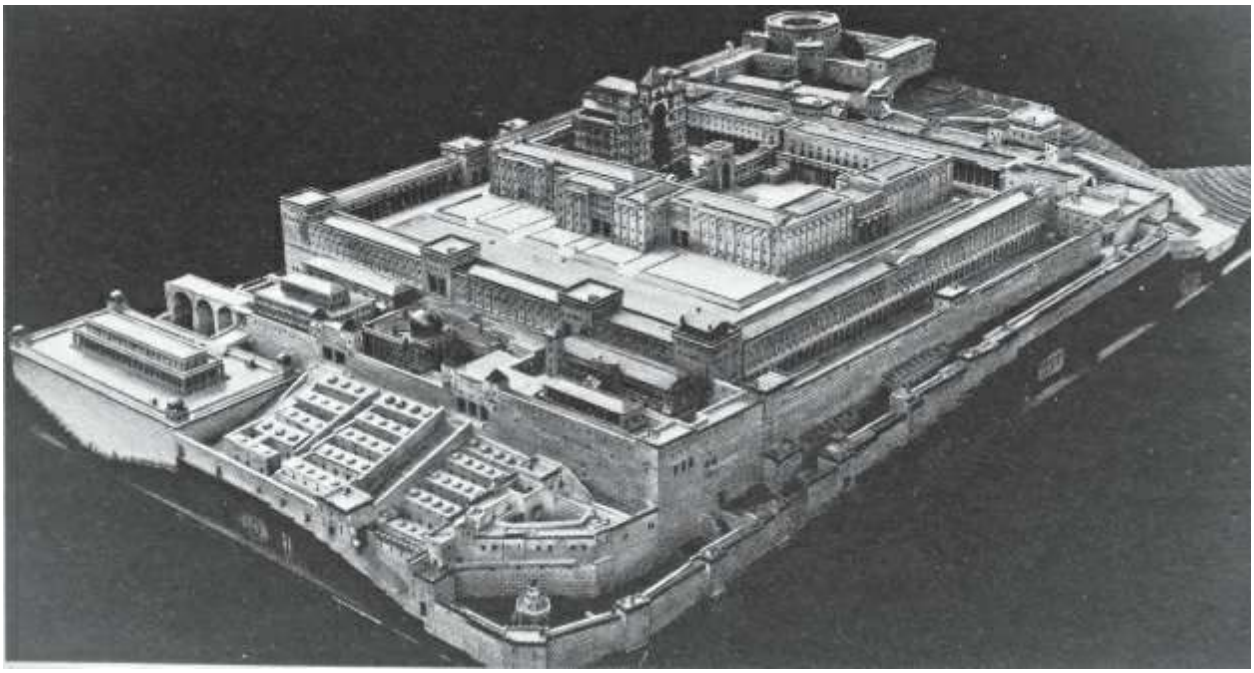


In 1872 Ottoman Turkey was considering how best to be represented at the Great Exhibition to be held in Vienna the next year. The Austrian consul in Jerusalem managed to persuade the authorities to make an exhibit of the history of al-Haram al-Sharif and illustrate it with models. The task of designing and fabricating the models fell to Conrad Schick (1822–1901), a German missionary and architect, who had arrived in Jerusalem in 1845 to teach the building trades to the young men of the city. The models, which he saw as teaching tools for his students, were exhibited in Vienna from 1873 to 1875. His monograph on the Tabernacle and the Temple, *Die Stiftschutte, der Tempel in Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz der Jetztzeit*, published in Berlin in 1896, is a commentary on these models. This experience led him to a more careful and scholarly examination of the physical evidence.[46]

He would become a leading architect in an increasingly European Jerusalem,[47] and an authority on the city's ancient remains; he is known to have penetrated deep into the subterranean remains beneath the Temple platform.[48] This was a period when the Ottoman authorities were making much-needed repairs to the Dome of the Rock, bringing builders and engineers into the Haram, and Schick was able to observe digging operations and the clearance of blocked underground channels, normally forbidden to foreigners. From this evidence Schick created his version of the Temple (Figure 7.23). Though surrounded by some of the most able archeologists of the age Schick appears to have produced a work of imagination over scholarship. The underlying form is from Vogüé's reconstruction, evident in the representation of the outer towers and the wall surfaces, but these are

embellished with an architecture all his own. On the east the Temple platform triples in height; at the south, Solomon's palace is formed out of an extension of Herod's Stoa, becoming a massive defensive structure. Apart from being grandly over-built, the strangest invention is the Sanctuary: its great portal is flanked by towers and capped with pyramidal roofs. It could be that Schick allowed himself to consider a time in the not-too-distant future when he would be commissioned as architect for such a reconstruction. The year was 1896. It is of passing interest that the most conservative of the Orthodox communities in Jerusalem now occupies an early project he designed.

Figure 7.23 *Reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon*. C. Schick (1822–1901).

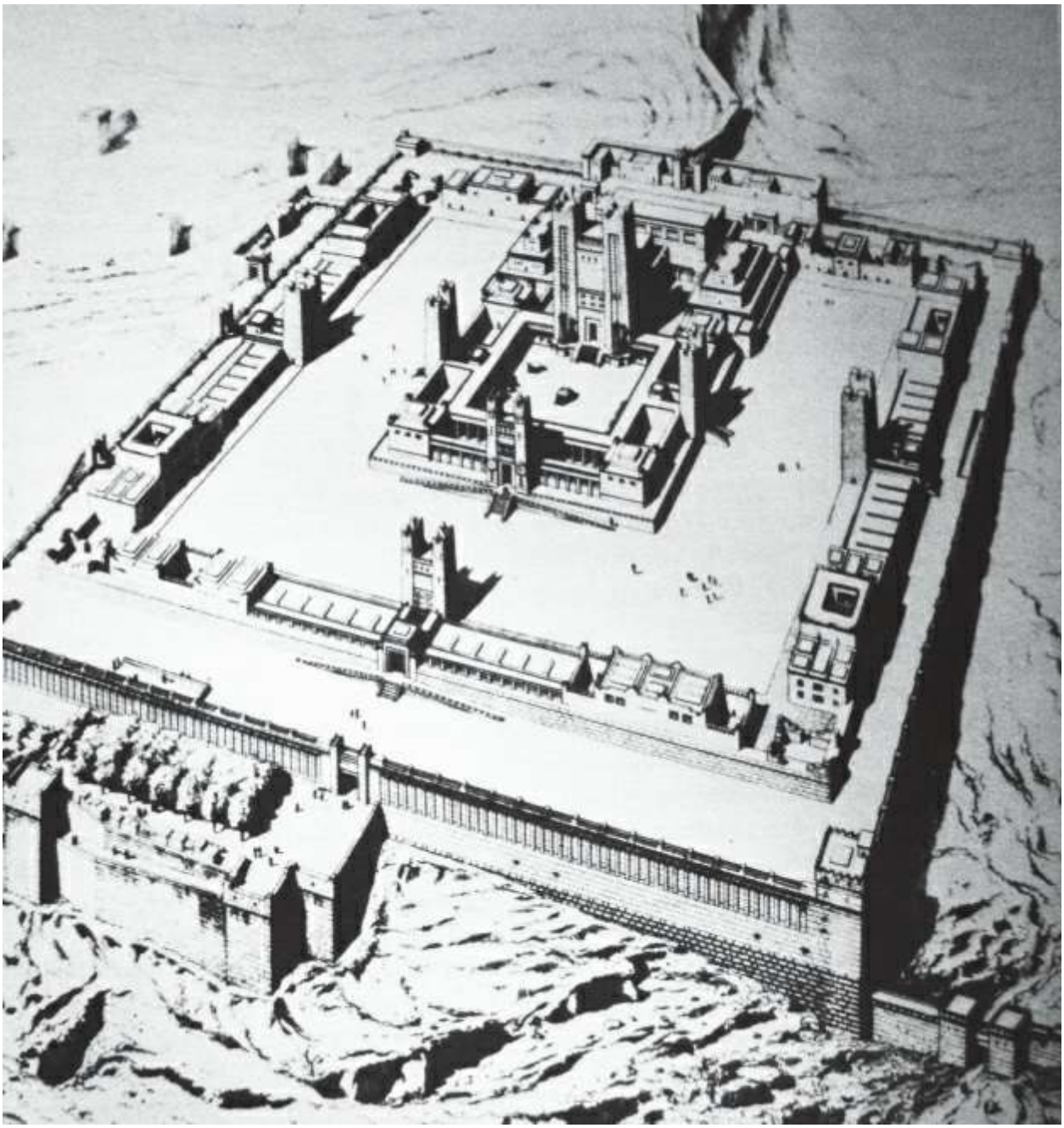


Russians established the first Jewish agricultural settlement in Palestine in 1882, and there was an ever-increasing Christian European presence in Jerusalem. In Vienna in 1896, Theodor Herzl published the pamphlet *Der Judenstaat*, advocating the creation of an autonomous Jewish state, preferably in Palestine. And as this foreign presence increased, thoughts of the Temple inevitably moved from Europe to Palestine. In 1880 French architect and historian Charles Chipiez (1835–1901), accompanied by the archeologist Georges Perrot, embarked on a journey to Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and on throughout the Middle East, in preparation for the production of major series of books *Histoire de l'art dans l'antiquité* (*On the History of*

the Arts in Antiquity).[49] The work was never fully completed, but, from 1884 onwards, five volumes were published and received with great acclaim. These were meticulous studies of the major ancient cultures, for which Chipiez produced hundreds of drawings, ranging from perspectives of great works of architecture to careful studies of sculpture and pottery. Such was his reputation that in the late 1880s the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York commissioned him to direct the construction of a collection of architectural casts which went on display in 1889. That same year Chipiez' reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon made its appearance at L'Exposition Universelle de Paris.

His is an expansive view of the Temple seen from the east high above Mount Moriah (Figure 7.24). What he represents must be considered in the knowledge that he had spent many months—often in discomfort—examining monuments from a time in history not too distant from the building of the Temple. His task necessitated an intense engagement with recording the surviving ruins and then imagining them when new. There are several drawings of his Temple. They are clearly the work of an architect, intricate and elaborate and very physical. The major elements are familiar—a vast rectangular walled enclosure surrounding an inner complex with the grand facade of the Sanctuary at the center. Tall, crenellated towers mark the gateways at the center of all the enclosures. Similar towers twice as high flank the entry in the sanctuary. Chipiez produced several drawings of these portals; each stone is marked and the surfaces of the walls are decorated with stylized palms—elements transposed from his discoveries in the field.

Figure 7.24 *Perspective of the Second Temple*, Charles Chipiez.



The confidence with which he gives the Temple a specific architectural character raises the question as to his evidence for this choice and his motives. The issue of motive surrounds all these reconstructions in the latter half of the nineteenth century. None were prepared merely to entertain or to reveal truths within the Bible. In determining the Temple's architectural character Chipiez shows both his erudition and his attitude to Jews. In his *History of Art in Sardinia, Judea, Syria, and Asia Minor* Chipiez concluded that Jews were the “least artistic of the great peoples of antiquity:”[50] Thus,

the style he gave the Temple did not belong to them. These drawings were prepared in a France in which nationalism had become the defining factor of the culture, and where antisemitism was undisguised. (The climax was in the Dreyfus affair of 1894.) Jews were portrayed not just as "alien" to the culture, but as a threat.[51] Wilhelm Lubke wrote in his *Grundriß der Kunstgeschichte —Outlines of the History of Art*—in 1888: "Jews, having no artistic sensibility of their own, borrowed architectural forms on an eclectic principle from the nations dwelling around them."[52, 53] Even as late as 1919 the French art historian Elie Faure wrote in his *Histoire de l'art* that while "their whole effort was employed in raising a single edifice, the house of a terrible and solitary God," yet it proved unworthy of "that Jewish genius, so grandly synthetical, but closed and jealous…whose voice of iron has traversed the ages."[54] All such thoughts lie behind the clever surface of the Chipiez reconstruction, and an architectural style he consciously formed from the cultures outside Judea.

By the end of the nineteenth century, decades of speculation on the form of the Temple had cultivated wide public interest, stimulated by popular publications and spectacles. As scholarship paid increasing attention to recovering the evidence of the sacred ground from the surviving stones, the idea of rebuilding the Temple began to emerge in, among others, an American group of Freemasons. The main article in the *Illustrated London News* of August 28, 1909 was headlined "Freemasons Plan to Rebuild the Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem." The article was explicitly aware of the implications of such a plan: "The site originally occupied by the Temple is now filled with the Harem-ash Shereef, 'The Noble Sanctuary', which to the *Moslems* is only less sacred that Mecca and Medina… Therefore it is obvious that any attempt to interfere with the present condition of things would in all probably bring about the greatest religious war the world has ever known." Filling the lead page of the article is a photograph of the model of the proposed reconstruction.[55]

It is salutary to reflect that even at the onset of the twentieth century, racial and religious division had begun to mark the idea of the Temple.

Notes

[1] Matthew 21: 12–15; Mark 11: 15–17; Luke 19: 45; John 2: 13–16.

[2] *Expulsion of the Money-changers from the Temple*, Fresco, 1304–06, Giotto di Bondone 1267–1337, Cappella Scrovegni (Arena Chapel), Padua. The narrative for the cycle was drawn from the *Meditations of the Life of Jesus* by the Pseudo-Bonaventura.

[3] These reproduced and extended *Passion,* a series of copper engravings.

[4] After 18 years of deliberation.

[5] Minneapolis Institute of Art

[6] The oddest aspect of the painting is the pasting of heads of his favorite painters on to the lower right: Michelangelo, Giulio Clovio, Titian, and Raphael. As the years pass he repaints the subject several times, concentrating making the composition more concentrated. In the version in the Frick there are bas-reliefs in niches on either side of the arch illustrating the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise and the sacrifice of Isaac, both Old Testament prefigurations of the Purification of the Temple. In the last version, in the Parish Church of San Ginés, in Madrid (after 1610), the composition is symmetrical; behind Christ is an arch, below which is a golden vessel—the Ark? Any relation to the descriptions of Josephus had gone.

[7] Placed between *The Sermon on the Mount* and *The Last Supper*, the inscription above refers the attempted stoning of Christ.

[8] Including, it is believed the artist.

[9] Raffaello Santi, 1483–1520.

[10] It was commissioned for the chapel in the church of San Francesco of the Minorities at Città di Castello in Umbria.

[11] Only a precocious 21-year-old would have had the gall to place his name and the date across the center on the arcade: *RAPHAEL URBINAS MDIIII*. Though there is no obvious reference, Raphael may have had help in perfecting the architecture from his Urbino friend, the architect Donato Bramante, who had just completed the building of the exquisite Tempietto in the cloister of the church of San Pietro in Montorio in Rome in 1502, also with the Temple in Jerusalem in mind.

[12] *Postillae* Nicholas de Lyra, Ground Plan of the Temple precincts, Oxford, Bodleian Library.

[13] Estienne was the highly regarded printer.

[14] Also known as “The King's Bible.” *Biblia sacra hebraice chaldaice, graece et latine, Philippi II regis catholici pietate et studio ad sacrosanctae Ecclesiae usum*. (http://www.kb.nl/galerie/100hoogtepunten/034-en.html, accessed April 9, 2012.) The Vulgate was the Latin Bible used by the Roman Catholic Church, primarily translated by St. Jerome in the fourth century. In 1546 the Council of Trent decreed that the Vulgate was the exclusive Latin authority for the Bible, but it required also that it be printed with the fewest possible faults.

[15] A priest in the service of the Military Order of St. James. He accompanied the Bishop of Segovia to the Council of Trent in 1562.

[16] Although many were involved, it was predominantly the work of Montano and his prodigious knowledge of languages. It fell foul of some in the Church who viewed its translation from the Hebrew as too Hebraic, thus undermining the authority of the existing translations. Montano survived this inquisition and remained in the service of the Spanish court until his death.

[17] *Antiquae Ierusalem vera icnographia* Arias Montano, Benedictus. Biblia polyglotta, Antwerp, Christopher Platin, 1572. Vol. VIII, *Nehemias sive de antiquae Ierusalem situ*.

[18] Plan from *Templi Iconographia* Benedictus Arias Montano *Exemplar*, Volume 8, *Antwerp Polyglot Bible* 1572.

[19] *JERVSALEM et suburbia eius, sicut tempore Christi floruit*, Christiaan van Adrichem (1533–1585). From: *Jerusalem et suburbanorum brevis*, Köln, 1590.

[20] Villalpando added two volumes: Of these the second is in two parts:. *“Explanationum Ezechielis prophetae, pars prima, in tredecim capita sequentia”* (Rome, 1604); II. “*De postrema Ezechielis prophetæ visione*” (Rome, 1605). This second part of the second volume goes into a detailed archeological study of the Temple. The third volume of this commentary on Ezekiel is entitled *Apparatus urbis ac templi Hierosolymitani* (Rome 1604).

[21] The caption reads “VERA HIEROSOLYMAE VETERIS IMAGO A IOANNE BAPTISTA VILLALPANDO CORDUBENSI E SOCIETATE IESU ELABORATA PRO SUO VRBIS AC TEMPLI

HIEROSOYMITANTI APPARATU COLLATO STUDIO CUM P. HIERONYMO PRADO EX EADEM SOCIETATEROMAE SUPERIORUM PERMISSU CUM PRIVELEGIO SUMMI PONTIFICIS IMPERATORIS REGIS CATHACOLICI SENATUS VENETI."

[22] Displaced from Jerusalem after the destruction of the city and Solomon's Temple by Nebuchadnezzar II.

[23] The scribe Villalpando had to confront the problem of the nature of ancient weights and measures. If this was God's work it was essential to know the precise lengths of reeds and cubits. In volume 2 he develops a mathematical treatise which in volume 3 produces a comparison between Hebrew, Greek, and Roman measures, from which he produced a mathematical instrument for determining the volumes of spheres and cubes.

[24] English versions of Villalpando's plans and elevations have survived. The Plan from the English edition is titled *Ichnography or Ground Plan of Solomon's Temple,* and identifies the main feature as "1 The Holy of Holies, 2 The Holy or Sanctuary, 3 The Brazen Sea, 4 The Kings Seat to some, or to others as Pulpit, where the Priests expounded the Law and Chambers on each side of several…and Porches and Piazzas."

[25] There is additional text in the English version of the "Elevation Orthography or Draught of the Upright Buildings of Solomon's Temple as they appeared on the East-side thereof":

> …denotes the outermost Wall of All, which encompassed by all the ground belonging to the Temple–and is to be conceived to run all along before the two other B C and C C…denotes the Wall or Building which encompassed the Court of the gentiles and was built like a cloisters or Piazzas, called in Scriptures Porches and which is likewise conceived to run along before the Wall of the Building CC…the Wall and Building within which none might enter but Israelites and such others as had obliged themselves to observe the Whole Law of Moses.

[26] Matthäus Merian, *Icones Biblicae* (Luther's translation Strasbourg: Lazarus Zetzner, 1625). The 1625 Frankfurt edition probably antedated this edition. The 1630 edition has been reproduced with English translations as *Mathaeus Merian: Iconum Biblicarum* (Wenatchee, W. Aust., 1981); with German text its illustrations were reproduced as *Mathaeus Merian: Die*

Bilder zur Bibel, mit Texten aus dem Alten und Neuen Testament, ed. Peter Meinhold (Hamburg, 1965). Published originally in Paris by Charles de Sercy in 1670–75, it was last published in 1865, having had a total of only seven printings in its entire published history.

[27] He had made his reputation in the cityscapes he made for Martin Zeiler's *Topographia Germaniae* among which was a contemporary view of Jerusalem, though no hint of this was evident in his portrayal of the ancient city.

[28] Including *Apparatus ad Biblia Sacra* Grenoble, 1687, translated into French by order of the Bishop of Châlons under the title *Introduction à la lecture de l'Écriture Sainte*, Lyons, 1689, and *Harmonia, sive Concordia quatuor Evangelistarum*.

[29] *Libri Septem*. Paris, Joannem Mariette, via Jacobaea, sub Columnis Herculeis, 1720.

[30] Lamy had made a reconstruction earlier for his *Introduction à l'Écriture Sainte* in 1709, but, though massive, it was no equal to the form the Temple had assumed in his imagination in the last years of his life.

[31] Ezekiel 41: 7.

[32] His treatise on vampires written in 1746 considered the possibility of their existence; he also published a gruesome set of illustrations of torture.

[33] *Solomon's Temple* Abraham ben Jacob. Amsterdam *Haggadah* after Merian.

[34] *Hartlib Papers*, 3/3/32A–33B, cited in Jim Bennett and Scott Mandelbrote (1998), *The Garden, The Ark, The Tower, The Temple*. Exhibition Catalogue, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

[35] "Autograph draft of a Discourse on Architecture," quoted in Lucy Phillimore (1881), *Sir Christopher Wren: His Family and his Times (With Original Letters and a Discourse on Architecture Hitherto Unpublished)*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co. (http://archive.org/stream/sirchristopherwr00philiala/sirchristopherwr00phili accessed April 9, 2009).

[36] With the Treaty of Westphalia (Peace of Munster) in 1648, the Netherlands had emerged as a new and very different nation from anything that had existed before. As the first "modern" nation, it established religious

tolerance and freedom of conscience.

[37] According to Peter Fox, Librarian at the University Library, Cambridge (http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/Exhibitions/Footprints_of_the_Lion/index.html, accessed April 9, 2009).

[38] He who produced the extraordinary drawing of Covent Garden in 1658.

[39] Newton would have been aware of other efforts, particularly the exact work of H. Prideaux, the Dean of Norwich Cathedral.

[40] Borromeo, Church of St. Charles, created in thanks for deliverance from a plague.

[41] Others were Hagia Sophia, the Pantheon, St. Peter's, and, surprisingly, the Dome des Invalides in Paris and St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

[42] Robert Sayer (1725–1794), who worked with John Bennett (active 1770–1784), was an important English map and print publisher in the mid to late eighteenth century.

[43] Subtitled *El Templo Salomon* to broaden its appeal.

[44] An American version of the *Illustrated London News*.

[45] *Le Temple de Jérusalem: monographie du Haram-ech-Chérif, suivie d'un essai sur la topographie de la Ville-sainte*, Paris, 1864. Partially translated into English as "The Hauran," in Charles William Wilson, ed. (1871), *The Recovery of Jerusalem: A Narrative of Exploration and Discovery in the City and the Holy Land*. London: R. Bentley.

[46] It was exhibited with another model in the Turkish pavilion at the Vienna Exhibition of 1873. Later his agent, the Reverend J. H. Brühl, sold them to the Mission House Museum in Basle, Switzerland. Some of the models may still be seen in Jerusalem at the St. Paulus Hospice, better known as the Schmidt School, which is situated opposite the Damascus Gate.

[47] In 1846, just after arriving, he planned the self-contained *Mea Shearim* community, which developed over the following 60 years and is now a bastion of the ultra-orthodox.

[48] Publishing in the journals of the British and German societies dedicated to the exploration of Palestine, namely the Palestine Exploration Fund and the Deutscher Palästina-Verein.

[49] This was for the publishers Hachette.

[50] Margaret Olin (1996), “Nationalism, the Jews, and Art History,” *Judaism* 45: 461–482. (findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0411/is_n4_v45/ai_19016966/, accessed April 9, 2012).

[51] Pseudoscientific theories abounded asserting that Jews were inferior to the so-called Aryan “race,” and this was applied to all elements of the culture, including architecture.

[52] Olin, 1996.

[53] There is an English translation of the work from 1904.

[54] Olin, 1996.

[55] From a design by Johann Martin Tenz. Tenz, a careful scholar and author of *Jerusalem and its Temples* and articles for the British Palestine Exploration Fund, and certainly acquainted with Schick, presumably had no direct connection with this project. A version of this model sits to this day in the basement of the Palestinian Exploration Fund offices in London.

Chapter 8

Jerusalem

Jerusalem remained defenseless through all the centuries of Muslim rule and, though it continued to attract pilgrims from the three faiths, the city languished, its buildings neglected. Just as the desire to recreate Solomon's Temple and picture the place of Christ's passion was for centuries the concern of European, then later American, Christians, so an interest in the actual reality of Jerusalem was a uniquely Western concern. To map is in a sense to own and, as will be seen, the more the West mapped the city, the more the issue arose of who had rightful possession.

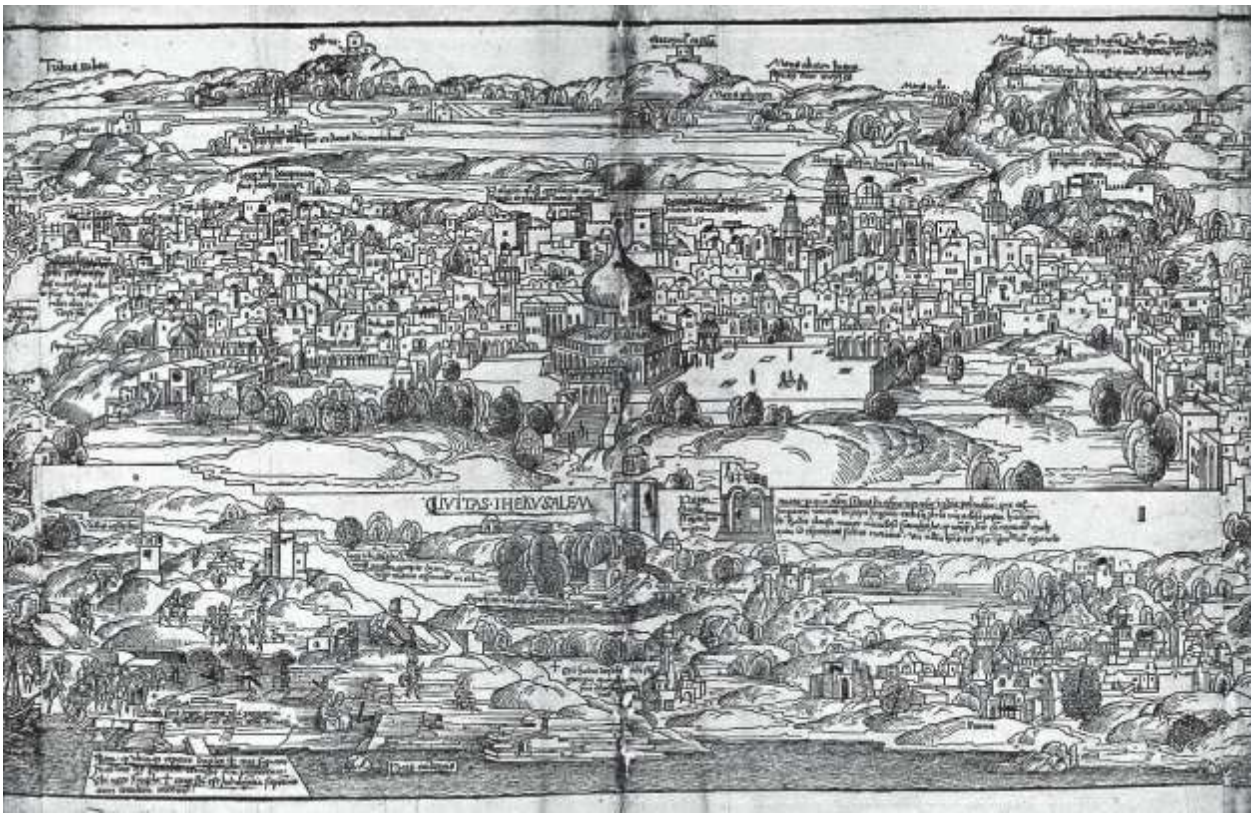
Views

The Christian view of Temple Mount in the fifteenth century survives in the reports of several travelers. Felix Fabris visited the city in 1480 and was troubled by the extreme neglect of Christian structures compared with care given to Islam's holy places:

> Although I myself am fond of seeing strange and curious sights, yet I never was tempted to enter the Temple [the Dome of the Rock] but was satisfied by the sight of it, by which I confess I have often been troubled and scandalized, when I compared the cleanliness, the beauty, and the decent order of the [Muslim] Temple with our churches, which, O shame, are like stables for beasts of burden. Our churches stand all dirty with people walking through them as though they were inns, and befouled with filth, to our great confusion and to the contempt and reproach of the sacraments. It is a burning shame to see at Jerusalem the church of Christ's Resurrection standing almost without decoration like a smoky hospice and to see the church of Muhammad neat and clean like a king's palace.[1]

This “church of Muhammad” was the most compelling sight to the illustrator of *Peregrinatio in terram sanctam* (*Travels in the Holy Land*). Here is the earliest representation of Jerusalem based on actual observation in the years 1483 and 1484. It is a brilliant document, combining the illusion of representing both the hundreds of miles across the length and breadth of Palestine with a precise view of Jerusalem that could only have been achieved by his being there (Figure 8.1). It is a vast panorama, with Jerusalem filling the center and all around the major cities and towns, shrinking in scale toward the far edges. North is on the left with a vignette of *Civitas Damasca*, Damascus. Along the bottom lies the coast of the Mediterranean where a grand ship has docked at the port of Jaffa, its pilgrim passengers have just disembarked into a landscape of ancient ruins. Moving to the right is Bethlehem and Church of the Nativity, shown with the many locations where indulgences might be obtained: into Egypt with Mecca in the distance across the Red Sea. The Nile flows across the right-hand corner past the pyramids to a vignette of *Chayru*, Cairo, formed from an elaborate collection of mosques and palaces on to the sea and *Alexandria* the long, structured remains of its ancient harbor given a dramatic presence.

Figure 8.1 *View of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives*. The central portion of a panoramic map of the Holy Land from: *Peregrinatio In Terram Sanctam* (*Travels in the Holy Land*). Woodcut, Bernard von Breydenbach and Erhard Reuwich. Mainz, 1486. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.



The book was produced by Bernhard von Breydenbach, (1440–1497), the record of his pilgrimage to Holland accompanied, as the book explains, by "Erhard Reuwich of Utrecht…a skillful artist," to make drawings of the sights. It is these drawings that have made the work invaluable. All that is known of Erhard Reuwich are these illustrations and that several editions of the book were printed in his house in Mainz. The scale and quality of the illustrations are an artistic and technical triumph.[2] Before setting out on the journey Reuwich must have considered what would be the most effective means of representing not just a great city, but also a nation. There is no obvious precedent in book illustration for what he manages to represent; a view of pilgrims disembarking, a spectacular panorama of the sites that they will visit that is somehow natural. The imagination travels trusting in the truth of the Reuwich vignettes. But then the eye settles on the view across Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives and one feels it could just as well be a photograph, it is so exact.[3]

Of the several drawings in the book, this view of the Holy Land is the largest and the most complex. It was made from three wood block prints, and has Jerusalem, within a great oval, filling the center block, testimony to the

persistence of earlier depictions of its plan as a perfect circle. It is the view of the city looking west from the Mount of Olives and, though more than 500 years have passed, it is familiar in every element. In the distance on the left is Mount Zion, at the center the towers of David's Citadel and close by a hospice for pilgrims. Then, to the right is the tower and dome of *Templu gloru dma Sepulchri*, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, carefully reduced from a highly rendered image elsewhere in the book. And filling the foreground above the east-facing wall of Herod's temple is the Noble Sanctuary. The Dome of the Rock, the central figure, dominates the view and across its roof are the words *Templum Salomonis*, the Temple of Solomon.

On the left, the Dome, nave, and portico of al-Aqsa mosque are shown as they are in the present (though several structures on its eastern face are no longer standing). On the right, around the minaret that marks the northwest corner, are the madrasas that still occupy the area. To the left of the Dome is the *Bab al-Sakina* minaret, unchanged, and the three arched galleries *Madras Ashrafiyya* completed in 1482, almost contemporary with his visit, a validation of the accuracy of the description.[4] To the right is the simple abstract form of the Dome of Ascension of the Prophet and in front, just visible behind the arcade and steps, can just be seen the Dome of the Chain.

In the eastern wall just below the Dome, Reuwich depicts the Golden Gate with an attention to detail second only to the Dome. It is a simple view of the two arches with two crosses over its southern arch depicting the presence of what had been a Crusader chapel. Reuwich would have believed that it was by this gate that Christ entered the Temple and it would be through this gate that he would return. A figure stands within the arch; inside, a wall may be blocking the interior gate.

Why name the Dome of the Rock the Temple of Solomon? The pilgrim Fabris had also called it a temple but also used the phrase “church of Muhammad.” All pilgrims would have been assured that the Dome was a work of Islamic faith. They would have known that Christ's prophecy had been fulfilled and the Temple destroyed. However, the legacy of a century of Crusader occupation would have established a new Christian history and given new value to the objects on the Mount. Reuwich was present in the city less than two centuries after the Christian defeat, and Jerusalem remained in the Christian imagination a perfect circle at the center of the world, and the

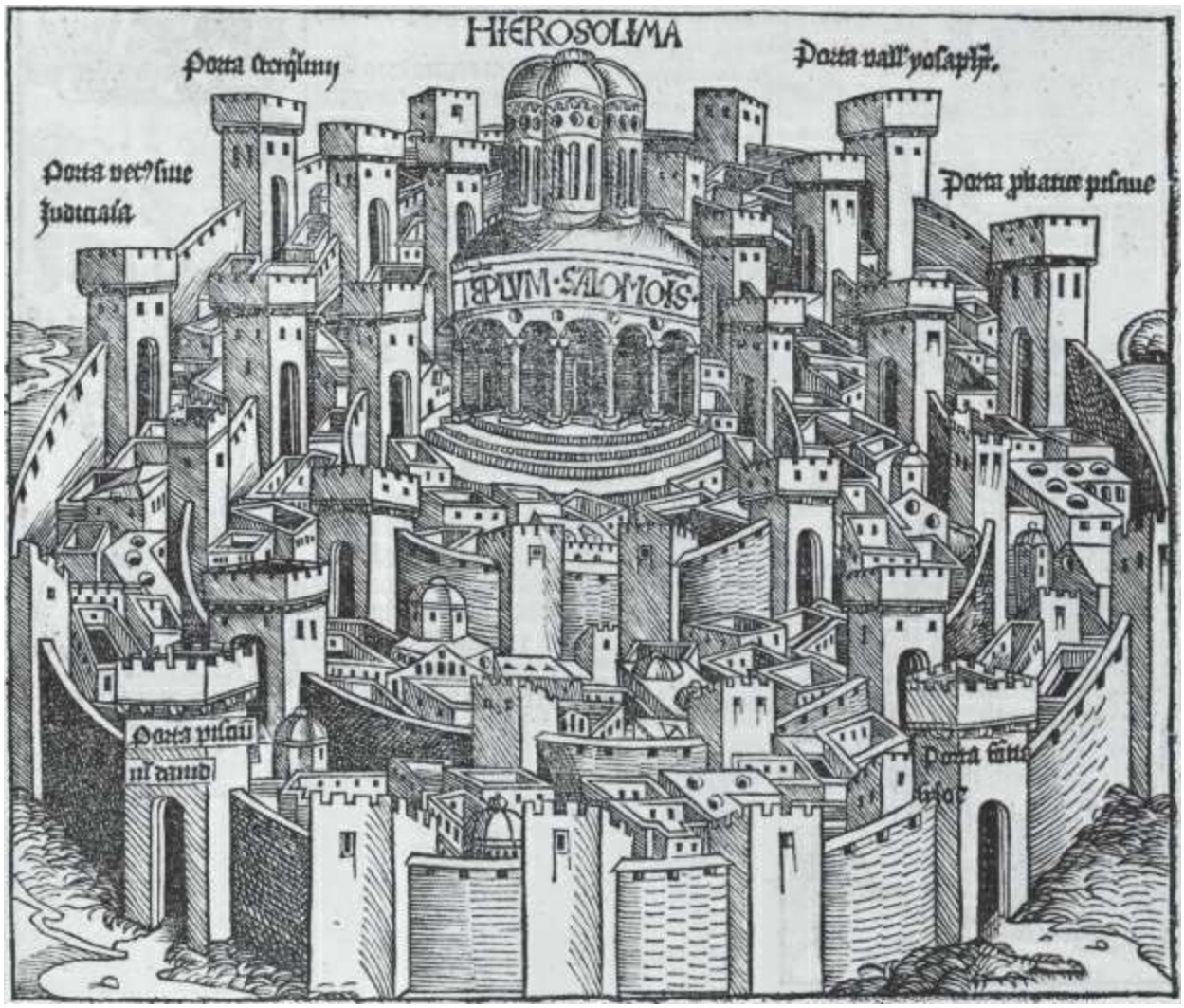
perfect physical form to occupy the center of the center was the Dome of the Rock. Such a pivotal symbol must by necessity have had its origins in the foundation of the faith in the Temple of Solomon.

The book was a success. It gave literate Europe a precise image of the exact character of Temple Mount, and the depiction of Jerusalem was immediately seen as useful to pilgrims and widely copied. In the same decade as the publication of *Peregrinatio* the Dome was idealized in several majestic paintings.

The year 1493 saw the publication of a work that would become even more successful, *The Nuremberg Chronicle*, or the *Liber Cronicarum*, a history of the world from creation up to the then present compiled by one Dr. Hartmann Schedel.[5] It follows the narratives of the Bible, but digresses into natural phenomena, royal genealogies and the histories of many western cities. Many of the illustrations show the influence of Reuwich, but in the images of Jerusalem symbol and myth replaced his careful accuracy.[6] There are three illustrations of the city in different parts of the text, all by different hands. The first is a lively page[7] in which the image of the Temple sits atop portraits of high priests and kings of Israel, the setting for their various performances. The portraits are more accomplished than the view of the city. It is a view from the north with a strangely diminished Dome of the Rock labeled *Templum Salomonis*, the actual dome shrunk to a small flourish beneath a crescent moon.

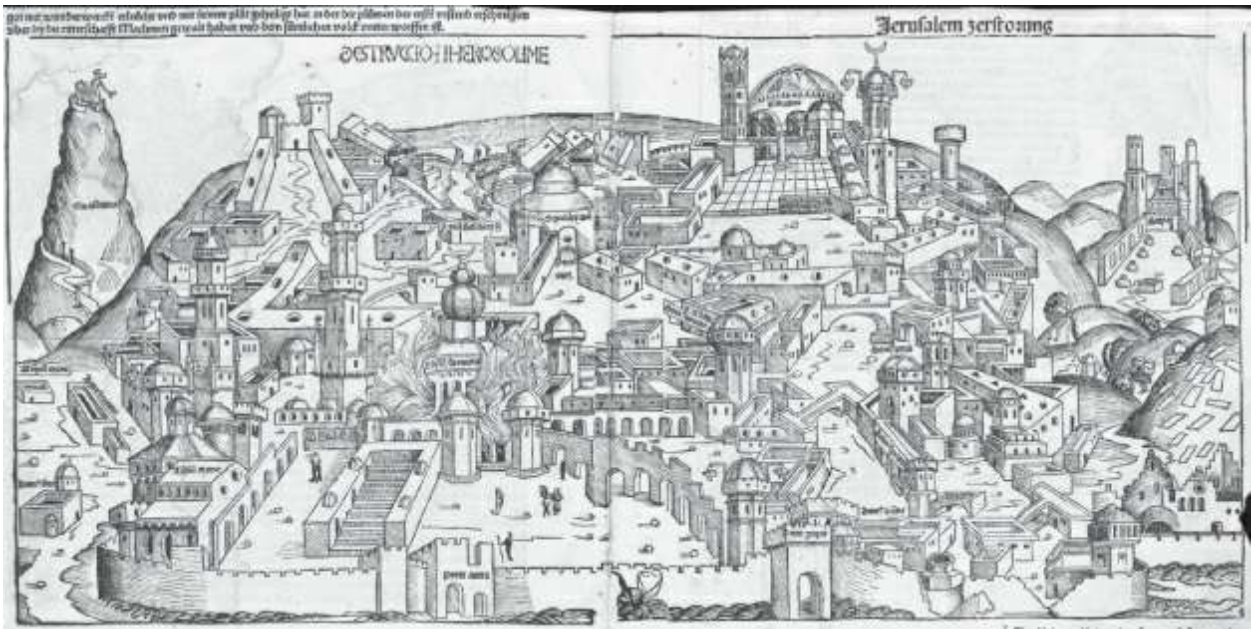
The second illustration is a potent graphic symbol (Figure 8.2). Here *Teplum Salomois*[8] dominates the center of a perfectly circled city, protected by layers of defensive walls and towers. An arcade surrounds the Temple, out of which a dome bursts from a cluster of cylindrical structures. There is a slight echo of Raphael's elegant temple from *The Marriage of the Virgin*.

Figure 8.2 The Temple of Solomon (“Teplum Salamois”), *Hierosolima*. Woodcut, Hartmann Schedel. From *Liber Cronicarum* (*The Nuremberg Chronicle*), or *Die Schedelsche Weltchronik* (*Schedel's World History*), Nuremberg, 1493. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.



The last is a depiction of destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; it is based on Josephus (Figure 8.3). This is either a naive portrayal or a sophisticated depiction of instability and ruin, or perhaps both. Though the foreground borrows the Golden Gate and the steps directly from Reuwich this is no disciplined perspective, but an expression of a city disturbed, its defensive walls and towers collapsed, the *Teplu Salamois* [sic] engulfed in wild flames in front of the collapsed cloisters. The Dome with crescent moon has become a sphere. Christ is seen being tempted by the Devil on the left; the Holy Sepulcher is domed and unscathed in the middle distance. And hovering over all, what appears to be a second temple named *Calvarie*, as if to suggest that out of death and destruction there was rebirth. It is a poignant drawing. Between the disordered jumble of buildings there are long swathes of wasteland.

Figure 8.3 The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. *Destrvccio Iherosolime*. Woodcut, Hartmann Schedel.



The medieval view of a perfect Jerusalem at the center of the world was present as late as 1581, in Heinrich Bunting's *Itinerarium Sacrae Scripturae*.[9] This was the Bible as an illustrated travel book and included the map whimsically titled *Die ganze Welt in einem Kleberblat—The whole world in a cloverleaf*. The continents of the Old World, Europa, Africa, and Asia are compressed into the three petals. Jerusalem holds the center in a circular vignette. It is seen from the east, with Calvary in front of a walled city, and with a platform carrying a domed Temple at the center.

The reality in Jerusalem, however, was far from ideal; a disciple of the celebrated rabbi and commentator on the Mishna, Ovadiah of Bertinoro, who joined him in Jerusalem in the 1490s, wrote:

> When I saw the desolate and ruined city from a distance, and Mount Sion lying waste, a habitation for jackals and a lurking place for young lions, which foxes traverse, my spirit overflowed, my heart mourned, and my eyes filled with tears. I sat down and wept, and rent my garments in two places as is required; and I prayed facing out Temple. May the Lord in His loving kindness bring back the captivity of Jacob speedily and in out days, that we may merit to see the rebuilding of our glorious mansion so that it be His will, Amen.[10]

Jerusalem under the control of the Mamluk Sultanate fell to the Ottomans in 1517, and between 1545 and 1566 Sultan Suleyman, known both as the Magnificent and the new Solomon, began to restore parts of the city. New stained glass was installed in the Dome of the Rock and the mosaics on the outer drum of the Dome were replaced with glazed tiles, stamping Ottoman authority over the Haram. A Persian miniature painting from this time shows Muhammad flying through angels from Mecca to Jerusalem. The Ka'ba is in the foreground with an abstract and patterned Haram in the distance, surmounted by the Dome of the Rock (Plate 20). It is a rare depiction from an Islamic source.

However, European views from later in sixteenth century depict a decaying city. Georg Braun (1541–1622) and Frans Hogenberg (1535–1590) were among a flourishing group of commercial cartographers based in Cologne responding to ever-increasing public interest in maps and city views.[11] They had reproduced prints of Jerusalem based on the plates of Peter Laicstain, and even a redrawing of Adrichem, but in 1575 they created their own view of the city titled *Hierosolyma, urbs sancta*[12]*—Jerusalem, Holy City* (Plate 21). This, as with much of their work, was not based on actual observation but drawn from all the evidence available—biblical texts, travelers' tales, and existing views of the city. In the foreground the viewer is welcomed by a group of Muslim men and women, this was a convention in all their views showing the dress of the citizens. It is again the view from the Mount of Olives, high enough to see all the streets laid out. Its main intent is to represent the actual city, though the biblical sites are marked. The Dome of the Rock and its attendant building stand strong and clear at the center; however, even a casual viewer would have noticed that in the background this was a city partly in ruins. The Holy Sepulcher is close to collapse and facing on to a swathe of land in which only foundations remain. The message would have been clear: Christianity was dying in Jerusalem, while the great monument to Islam is as constant as ever.

Hovering above the city view is a quote from Ezekiel V: *Haec est Ierusalem, Ego eam in medio Gentium posiu, et in eius circuitu terras,* —“This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.” Ezekiel was always cited when the church demanded renewal. This state of desolation caused great stress within the

Christian community. The Franciscan priest Elzear Horn, who lived in Jerusalem early in the eighteenth century, heard tales of a strange event that had happened in 1599, just a few years after the view was published. It is of a priest who became so agitated that:

> On the feast day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, which then fell on a Friday, he entered the Temple of Solomon, that is, the great mosque, about midday, when as usual Muslims from the whole city were congregated for prayer. Raising the crucifix in his hands, he began with great fervor of spirit courageously to condemn the impure sect of Muhammad and announce that faith in Christ was necessary for salvation —from long custom and fourteen years stay in the Holy Land he was fairly proficient in Arabic. The Muslims got angry, and, attacking him with drawn swords, they cruelly slew him. [13]

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century various revisions of the "Reuwich–Breydenbach" Jerusalem were produced, including a robust view from Matthäus Merian from around 1645 (Figure 8.4). However, one view from the eighteenth century has a strength and character that sets it apart from all others.[14]

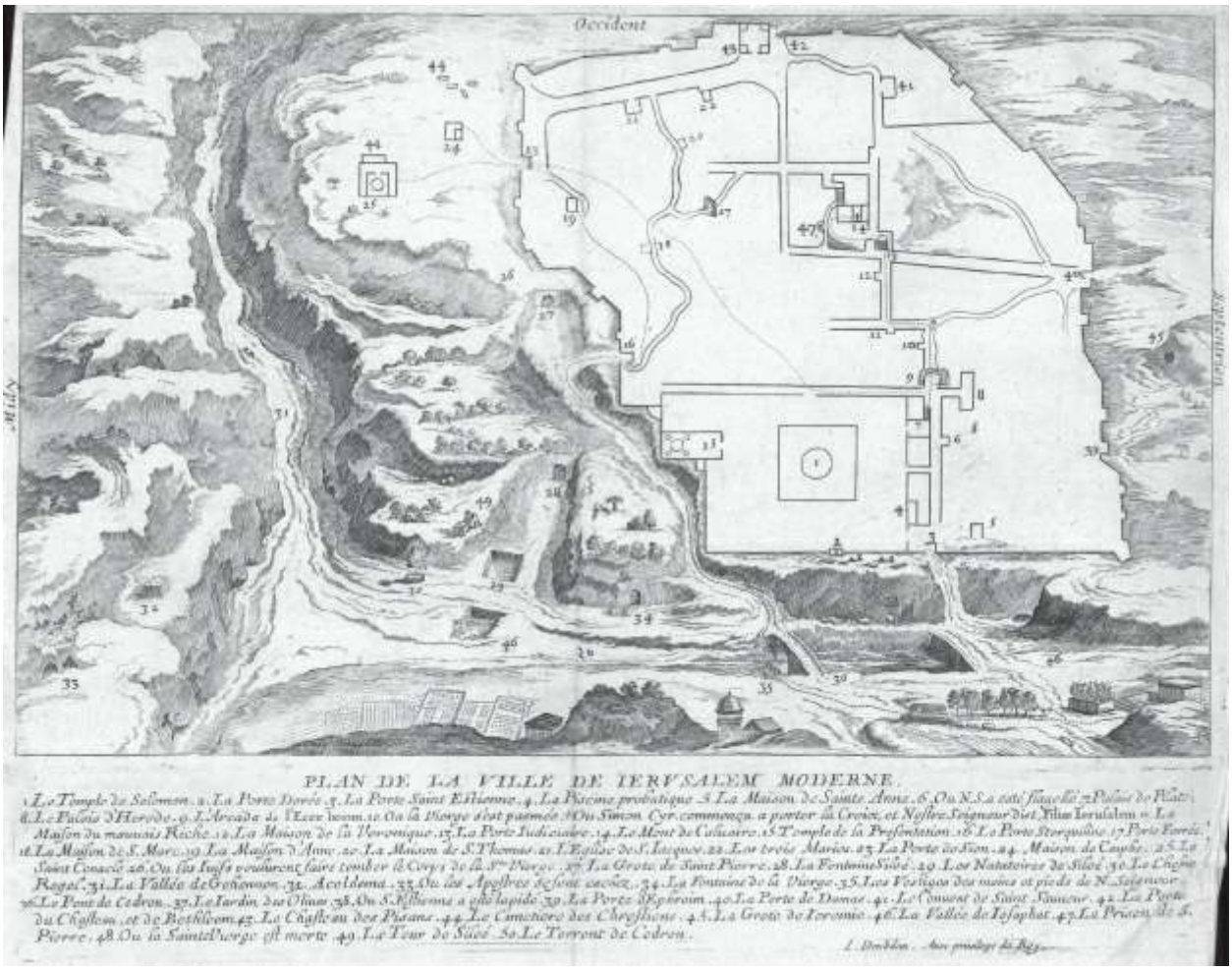
Figure 8.4 *Ierusalem*. Matthäus Merian 1645. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.

Cornelis de Bruyn (1652–1726) was a new breed of observer. When he was 22[15] he set out on a journey that would take him from Vienna and Rome to the Middle East. “I want to offer an accurate picture of those cities, towns, and buildings that I have visited,” he wrote, “and without recklessness I can claim to have done something that no one has done before.”[16] He had prepared well for his travel, and when he arrived in Jerusalem he wrote in his notes that he would “sketch the city, but not from the place of Christ's lamentations, because all the others who had painted there before me always portrayed it from this direction. I therefore proceeded more to the south of the Mount [of Olives] so as to draw my picture of the town as much as possible from the south-east.” The Ottoman authorities persistently forbade such Western practices, so de Bruyn pretended to be picnicking, his drawing board concealed by his companions.[17] His drawing *A Draught of the City of Jerusalem* was originally published in Delft in 1698 (Plate 22).[18] It shows the city in an immense sweeping landscape and, though the building forms are vague, it is an almost photographic view, as if he were using a *camera lucida*. It records what the eye saw, not what the observer knew: for example, only the tower of the Holy Sepulcher is visible. The Dome carefully drawn retains the title “Temple of Solomon.”

Maps

Again, to map is, in a sense, to own: among the earliest maps based on actual survey was one first published in *Le voyage de la Terre Sainte* (*The Journey to the Holy Land*) by Jean Doubdan, printed in Paris in 1666. It is titled *Plan de la ville de Ierusalem moderne* (Figure 8.5). Jean Doubdan, a canon of St. Paul's at St. Denis, visited the Holy Land in 1651. He was committed to sweeping aside the myths that had confused or corrupted faith and to presenting the actual reality of the biblical events. Despite Ottoman restrictions there is sense of precision to his work, suggesting that it was derived from a survey, but his interest was not recording the actual city in the present, but in offering "a true description of the most considerable places that our lord sanctified by his presence." He stays within the walls of the old city and maps only those interior streets and structures that were present in the time of Christ–even the church of the Holy Sepulcher is absent, marked simply as the place of Calvary. The Dome of the Rock is, however, included and named the Temple of Solomon, and he offers the surprising and in some sense accurate observation that al-Aqsa Mosque was the place where Christ was presented in the Temple. His intention is exactly the same as the Adrichem, though his is an enlightened sensibility, using rational methods not to question the events of Christ's last days but to place them in a tangible reality.

Figure 8.5 *Plan de la ville de Ierusalem moderne*.



The journals of the Anglican cleric Henry Maundrell are also concerned with conveying the reality of the Bible. These were published as the *Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem at Easter A. D. 1695* at Oxford in 1703. In all his observations he was both a believer and a skeptic, completely distrusting the myths that Catholics or Turks had created around the places linked to the Bible. He walked the same streets mapped by Doubdan and described the restrictions Christians faced in trying to view the "Noble Sanctuary." Christians were strictly forbidden from stepping foot on the sacred platform and had to wheedle a way into the houses in the surrounding area.

Maundrell recorded in his journal that:

> From the terrace of this house you have a fair prospect of all the place where the Temple stood; indeed the only good prospect, that is allowed you of it: for there is no going within the borders of it, without forfeiting your life, or, which is worse, your religion. A fitter place for an august

> building could not be found in the whole world than this area. It lies upon the top of Mount Moriah, over against Mount Olivet, the valley of Jehoshaphat lying between both mountains… In the middle of the area stands at present a mosque of an octagonal figure, supposed to be built upon the same ground, where anciently stood the *Sanctum Sanctorum*. It is neither eminent for its largeness or its structure and yet it makes a very stately figure by the sole advantage of its situation.[19]

He knew that the Dome of the Rock was not Solomon's Temple, he was told that it was the Mosque of Omar, and describes it with an elegant turn of phrase: "…neither eminent for its largeness, nor its structure, and yet it makes a very stately figure, by the sole advantage of its situation." It may have been that the figure was statelier by being recently restored, for the first half of the eighteenth century saw an extensive program of rebuilding and restoration on the Haram of both the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque, and the stained glass in the Dome was again replaced.

In eighteenth-century Europe, surveying and map-making, particularly the way of representing landforms, became much more a science than an art, mainly through the techniques of military surveying. One of the first maps of Jerusalem that applied such conventions was Richard Pococke's *A Description of the East* published in 1745.[20] It is again a map whose primary function was to locate places linked to biblical events. Though the graphics are elegant, the work is based, not on a survey, but on a brief visit and on borrowing from existing maps.[21] There is no mention of Solomon's Temple. Temple Mount is titled simply Moriah.

When William John Bankes led the first purposeful archeological expedition to Jerusalem in 181, he saw a restored Haram.[22] Bankes was a wildly libertine character that only wealth and the arrogance of the English elite could create. Friend of both Byron and the Duke of York, he is described as "proud…patronizing, fluent in Italian…with a dangerous temper, and a penchant for risk and a lack of self-restraint."[23] He was one of a group of scholars and artists that the Johann Ludwig Burckhardt had gathered around him to record ancient sites and copy inscriptions. This commission took him to Egypt in 1815, from where he would send back to England any ancient stone that took his fancy—a right that had been claimed by the British aristocracy for the previous decade.[24] It was in 1818 that he

and his colleagues traveled to Jerusalem and to saw the forbidden Haram. Bankes requested permission to explore and dig, but was refused, yet such was his will to possess that he and his colleagues resorted to digging dressed as natives, as they would have it, close to Herod's walls.[25] They were discovered and driven off with force.

Though he lived until 1855, Bankes remained a creature of the eighteenth century. A true modern man entered the stage in 1833, in the person of Frederick Catherwood, English architect and artist. While Bankes traveled for private pleasure, Catherwood was there for business, to produce the drawings that he would convert into a great panorama that would tempt and entertain the London masses. On November 13, 1833, with his drawing equipment and in the guise of an Egyptian officer, Catherwood walked on to the Haram. In a letter he described what happened next:

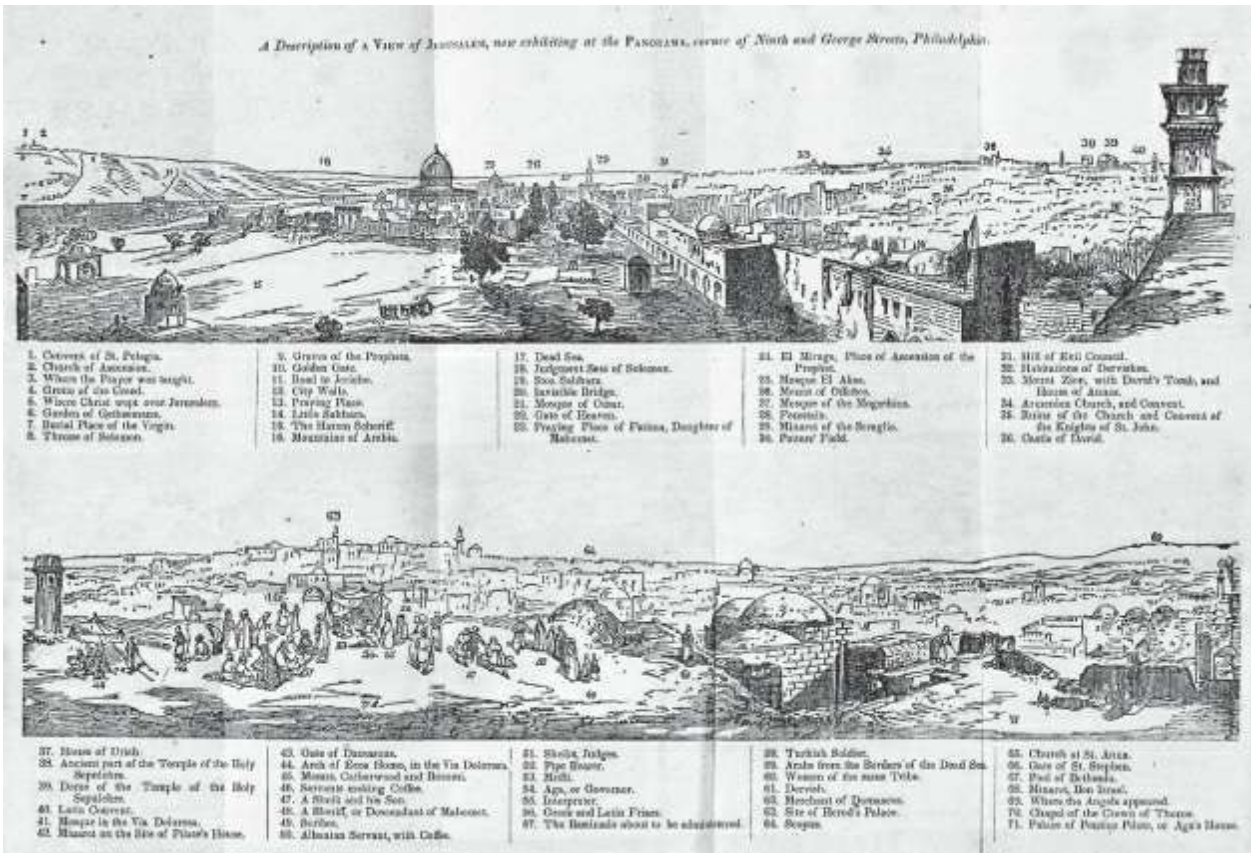
> It was a proceeding certain to attract attention and expose me to dangerous consequences. I quickly sat down to work, not without nervousness, as I perceived the Mussulmen, from time to time, mark me with doubtful looks; however most of them passed on, deceived by my dress and the quiet indifference with which I regarded them. At length, some, more fanatic than the rest, began to think all could not be right; they gathered at a distance in groups, suspiciously eyeing me, and comparing notes with one another; a storm was evidently gathering. They approached, broke into sudden clamour and surrounding us, uttered loud curses. Escape was hopeless; I was completely surrounded by a mob of two hundred people. Few moments would have past ere we had been torn to pieces, when an incident occurred that converted our danger and discomfiture into positive triumph. This was the sudden appearance of the Governor on the steps of the platform, accompanied by his usual train.[26]

Fortune had smiled on Catherwood. His visit had coincided with an extraordinary change in the attitude to Europeans in Jerusalem. The governor was the representative of the reformist Ottoman viceroy in Egypt, the Albanian Muhammad Ali, who had rebelled against Istanbul in 1832 and taken control of Syria–Palestine and Jerusalem. As he had in Egypt, Ali liberalized restrictions on travelers and missionaries across Palestine. The crowd rushed towards the governor's party demanding that he punish this

infidel profaning the holy precincts. But Catherwood had got to know the Governor; they had, he writes, “often smoked together.” The Governor at once addressed the mob: “You see my friends that our holy mosque is in a dilapidated state and no doubt our lord and master Mehemet Ali has sent this Effendi to survey it, in order to complete repair.” Turning to Catherwood he said that if anyone disturbed him in future, they would be dealt with. There had never been such access and openness to non-Muslims within the precincts of the Haram. In the following six weeks, Catherwood would produce many exquisite drawings and the first professional mapping of both Jerusalem and Temple Mount.

Catherwood is a remarkable presence; born in relative affluence in London in 1799 he studied architectural history and theory at the Royal Academy schools in the years of Sir John Soane's professorship. He was both gifted and precocious, exhibiting at the Academy when he was just 21. He arrived in Jerusalem after years of traveling throughout Europe as a commercial illustrator. His plans and views of the city were reproduced and published with success and became the basis for a spectacular panorama he produced for the impresario Robert Burford. First shown to the public in 1836 at the vast circular Barker Burford Panorama just off Leicester Square in the middle of London. It was a 360-degree view of Jerusalem centered on the Dome and the Haram (Figure 8.6)

Figure 8.6 Catherwood's panorama of Jerusalem. From the pamphlet entitled *Description of a View of the City of Jerusalem and the Surrounding Country, Now Exhibiting at the Panorama, Broadway, Corner of Prince and Mercer Streets, New York. Painted By Robert Burford, From Drawings Taken In 1834, By F. Catherwood, Architect.* Archives of the Pennsylvania Historical Society (the panorama was also displayed in Philadelphia).



This was a theatrical production, and such was its popularity the producers decided it should play in New York. Catherwood designed and built the stage —named the Rotunda – at the corner of Prince and Mercer Streets. The ads in the New York press proclaimed “Splendid Panorama of Jerusalem, a painting of the largest class, 10,000 square feet, from drawings of Mr. Catherwood, brilliantly illuminated every evening by upwards of 200 gas-lights, admission 25 cents.” Not long after opening, on the night of July 31, 1842, the press reported that Catherwood's Panorama of Jerusalem burnt last evening and was totally “destroyed together with the other contents of the building, among which were a large collection of curiosities…”[27]

As the nineteenth century progressed, the ideal Jerusalem faded as Western Christians and governments became increasingly interested in the city in reality, and the work that perfectly suited European taste was produced by the Scottish landscape painter David Roberts. His arrival in Jerusalem was but a stop on his extensive tour through the Middle East, which resulted in an extensive publication of prints from the drawings and watercolors. He drew the Haram from several points of view from outside the walls of the old city

(Plate 23). In their elegance and clarity they are among the most satisfying images ever produced of Jerusalem. They became the most favored views on the threshold of photography and have remained so. In the decades that followed Jerusalem and Temple became a favored subject for more adventurous artists.

Protestant missionaries also benefited from the progressive policies of Muhammad Ali, allowing them to establish a presence in Jerusalem for the first time. Catherwood's careful mapping of the city and Temple Mount became the benchmark for future surveys and was much used and added to by the influential biblical scholar and geographer Edward Robinson (1794–1863).[28] Born in 1794, Robinson was a gifted linguist and professor of biblical literature at Union Theological Seminary, New York City. In 1837 he took leave to explore Palestine accompanied by Eli Smith, a man fluent in Arabic who was in the employ of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Robinson was a cautious, meticulous scholar who journeyed in the service of God yet whose exhaustive survey laid the foundation for all subsequent archeological expeditions in Palestine. With extreme thoroughness he traveled the length and breadth of Syria–Palestine, recording in extensive and precise detail the land, the people and the structures they had given rise to. Three principles governed his approach. First he avoided contact with any and all Catholics, to be free from their myths. Second his major source of information was the Arab population—rich, poor, urban, and rural; helping examine Arabic place names for biblical connections. And lastly he deliberately traveled to places least visited. The result was *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Regions*, published in 1841, which became an immediate success.

As with his predecessors his mission was to validate the Bible:

> My one great object was the city itself in its topographical and historic relations, it site, its hills, its dales, its remains of antiquity, the traces of its ancient populations; in short, everything connected with it that could have a bearing upon the illustration of the scriptures.

His motto, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” was at the heart of the work as he emphasized in Italics in the introduction

> *…all ecclesiastical tradition respecting the ancient places in and around Jerusalem, and throughout Palestine, is of NO VALUE except so far as it*

is supported by circumstances known to us from the Scriptures or from other contemporary testimony.

Robinson had no difficulty at any time in approaching the entrances of the Noble Sanctuary and "looking upon the area as long as we pleased" as he wrote. He particularly wanted an overview of the Haram from the surrounding houses and was granted permission by the military commander of the city:

> We went first to the building on the northwest corner of the Haram. This was formerly the residence of the governor and stands near the site of the ancient fortress Antonia. Now it is used as barracks. From the flat roof there is a full view of the mosque and its court, a large and beautiful area, with trees scattered over it and several foundations, the whole forming a fine promenade. We saw there quite a number of females and many children playing.

With great care he compared the evidence on the ground with the descriptions in Josephus and wrote "Thus we are led irresistibly to the conclusion that the area of the Jewish temple was identical on western, eastern and southern end, with the present enclosure of the Haram." He was convinced that al-Aqsa Mosque built by Islam in the seventh century was in fact the Church of the Presentation of the Virgin (the Nea) built by Justinian in the early sixth.[29]

Beyond the facts, Robinson's text captures the mysterious and for some the tragic atmosphere in the city. At the Western wall he notices:

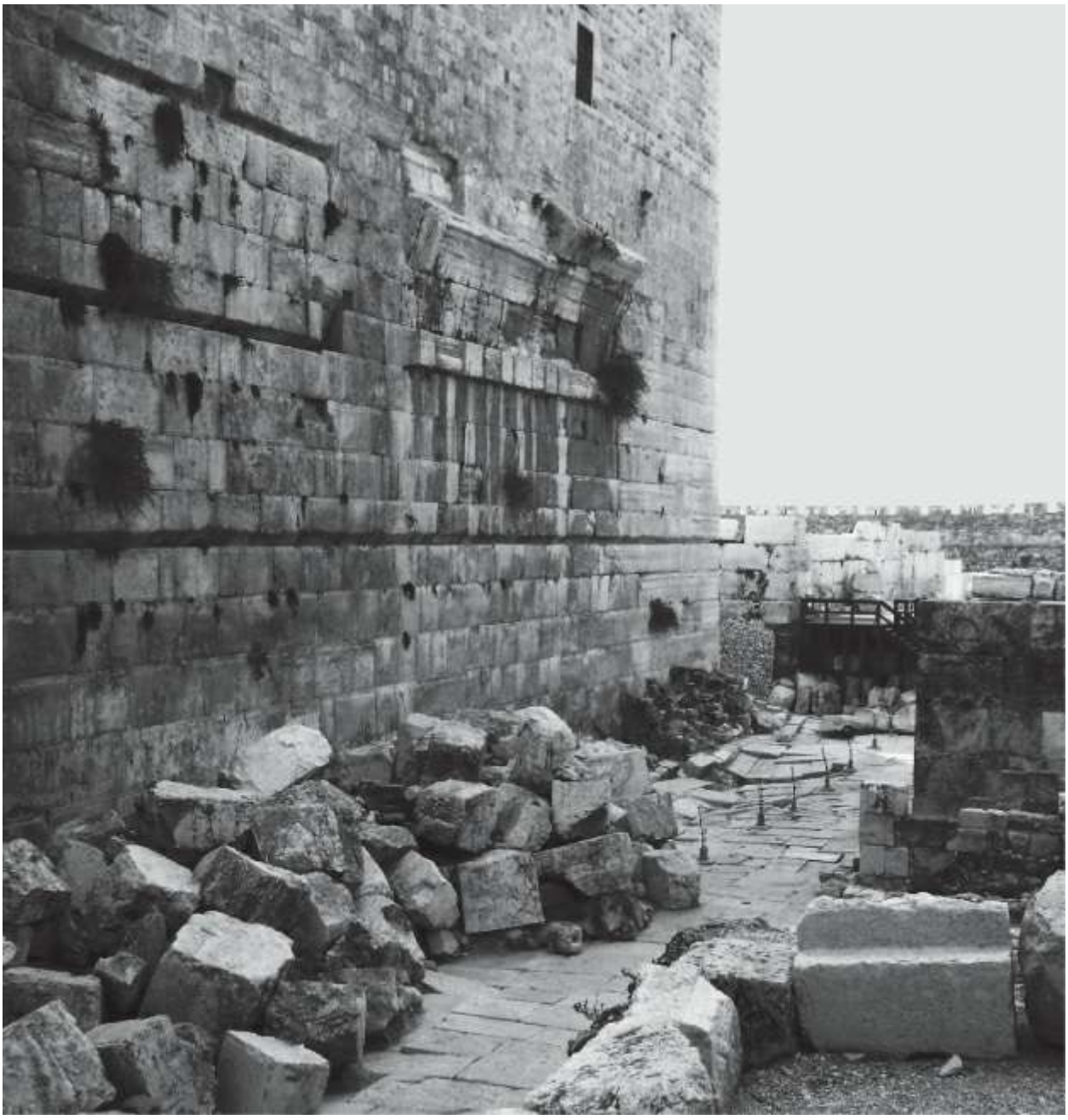
> Two old men, Jews, sat there on the ground reading together in a book of Hebrew prayers. It is the nearest point in which they can venture their ancient temple, and fortunate for them it is sheltered from observation by the narrowness of the lane and the dead walls around. Here bowed in the dust, they may at least weep undisturbed over the fallen glory of their race; and bedew with their tears the soil, which so many thousands of their forefathers once moistened with their blood.[30]

He was not an archeologist, yet his most lasting contribution was to confirm, from the observation of colleagues, that the fragmented trace of disturbed stonework in the southwest corner of the Temple wall was the springing-point of what had been a great arch, thus validating the descriptions

in Josephus. This trace was of the arch that had supported the bridge directly into Herod's Stoa. It is now known as Robinson's Arch[31] (Figures 8.7, 8.8).

Figure 8.7 Robinson's Arch, just appearing on the right of the tree, mid nineteenth century. Photographer unknown.

Figure 8.8 Robinson's Arch and the path beneath from the time of Herod, after the extensive archeological work in the 1960s. The rubble and the cracked paving are unchanged since the Roman destruction. Photograph: Alan Balfour.



Robinson's *Biblical Researches* was a recreation of Palestine in the time of Christ, repossessing through precise description the biblical lands for Protestantism. It was a scholarly repossession not a physical one, yet it produced a sense of privilege and ownership nonetheless. Uncovering the physical past of a place to which you had no claim, to reveal a reality that had profound meaning for your beliefs—a meaning you considered far and above the beliefs of those whose land it was—would lead to and an increasing complex sense of possession and eventually to conflict. Construction

documents must have been prepared for the never-ending task of renovation, yet unknown in the West are drawings or any form of documentation of the Dome or the Haram made by the Ottomans Turks or the Palestinian Arabs.

One person who had unique access to the restoration work of the Muslim authorities who administered the Haram, the Waqf, was James Thomas Barclay, a doctor with the American Christian Missionary Society, who arrived in the city in 1850. He had keen interest the ancient stones and as a reward for curing the Turkish governor of an infection was allowed to join the architect appointed to help repair the Dome. This appears to have given him free access to all parts of the Haram. In 1858 he published his findings in *The City of the Great King*. This is a massive work, and significant in recording his discovery, north of Robinson's Arch, of a doorpost and vast stone lintel of what he took to be an early entrance on to the Temple compound; it is now known as Barclay's Gate.[32] The map included in the text shows that he had managed to enter many of underground structures.

The text contains tales of life in the city, some poignant, some painfully revealing and none more so than his description of the procedure the “Frank” (as foreigners had been known since the defeat of the Crusaders) had to endure to be allowed to work within the Haram:

> When the clock of the Mosk needs repairing, they are compelled, however reluctantly to employ a Frank. But in order to have a clean conscience in the commission of such an abominable piece of sacrilege as the admission upon the sacred premises, they adopt the following expedient. The mechanic selected being thoroughly purged from his uncleanness ablution…a certain formula of prayer and incantation is sung over him at the gate. This being satisfactorily concluded, he is considered as exorcised, not only of Christianity (or Judaism, as the case may be), but of humanity also; and is declared to be no longer a man but a donkey. He is then mounted upon the shoulders of the faithful, lest…the ground should be polluted by his footsteps; and being carried to the spot where his labors are required, he is set down upon matting within certain prescribed limits; and the operation being performed, he is carried back to the gate, and there, by certain other ceremonies, he is duly undonkeyfied and transmuted back into a man again.[33]

British Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem

This desire to recover Jerusalem for Christ was modest when compared to the possessive desires of Empires. Active British interest in the Middle East came in the aftermath of Napoleonic wars as the great powers maneuvered to gain influence over a waning Ottoman Empire. British policy from the early decades of the nineteenth century was to preserve an intact Ottoman Empire and exploit its weakness for strategic and commercial advantages, an approach that stood until the end of the First World War. Complicating this policy was the effective leadership of the aforementioned Ottoman viceroy in Egypt, Muhammad Ali.[34]

He had risen to power in the vacuum left by Napoleon's failed conquest of Egypt, consolidating his position by massacring the former Mamluk rulers in 1811. In contrast to the corrupt and backward-looking administrations in most of the Ottoman provinces, Ali reformed the Egyptian economy, building a modern infrastructure and a modern army. The British viewed the emergence of an independent industrialized Egypt as a threat to their strategic interests. Of particular concern was the potential interference with the overland route through Egypt to India, a vital link in the line of imperial communications.

As his administration gained confidence Ali grew independent from the sultan in Istanbul. When called on to support the Ottomans in the Greek war for independence in the late 1820s, he demanded in return control over Syria, and adjoining lands. When this was refused, he invaded Syria in 1831, thus posing a direct threat to British military and commercial interests and causing anxiety among all the great powers. Throughout the 1830s, while Jerusalem was under his control, Ali pushed his forces north to within reach of Istanbul. At that point Britain joined forces with France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia in alliance with the Ottomans and drove Ali and his army back to Egypt. Jerusalem and Palestine again under the Ottomans returned back to incompetent and corrupt rule and were increasingly forced to concede to British interests.[35]

In 1840 and 1841 the British Admiralty sent out an expedition under the

command of Major Scott to survey the entire coast of Syria and to include the shores of the Dead Sea and the city of Jerusalem. Although the survey of the city was produced under the orders from the Commander of the Royal Engineers in Syria, where the British had an established a military presence, the resulting map retains a concern with religion. Inset in the top right corner, the plan of Solomon's Temple is placed over the Dome of the Rock; the center the Rock is named the “altar of burnt offerings.” These were secret documents, and twenty years later Carl Ritter in his *Comparative Geography of Palestine and the Sinaitic Peninsula* complained “Its results are not yet made public, and all that I have been permitted to use has been the map of Jerusalem, though it has been hoped that ere long other charts will be published.” He added “The accounts of that expedition, as we have them in the public journals are contradictory and unreliable.”[36]

In 1858 the Turkish Governor, Surayya Pasha, appointed Ermete Pierotti to be architect and engineer of all civil and military structures around the city, including the Haram. Pierotti was a disgraced Italian military engineer who had chosen self-exile in Jerusalem. This position gave him more access to the Haram that any previous European. He published his discoveries in *Jerusalem Explored*. The book offered the tempting proposal that exploring the substructures beneath the Haram could provide insight into the location of the Temple. However Pierotti's explorations had been casual, his surveys carelessly inaccurate and he had used the work of others without acknowledgment.[37]

Britain was not the only great power seeking to benefit from a decaying Ottoman empire, however. In 1854 control of the Christian Holy Places in Palestine was the root cause of Britain and France declaring war on Russia. Emperor Louis Napoleon sought to reinstate French custody of the Christian property in Jerusalem, the Sultan in Istanbul agreed. Russia protested, claiming on behalf of the Eastern Church that it was the true defender of Christianity in the East. The result was the Crimean War, which ended in 1856 in the defeat of Russia. Beyond the holy sites the underlying cause was the continual maneuvering among the great powers in anticipation of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, known from the late eighteenth century in political circles as the “Eastern Question.” It was Palestine that was of particular interest to Britain.

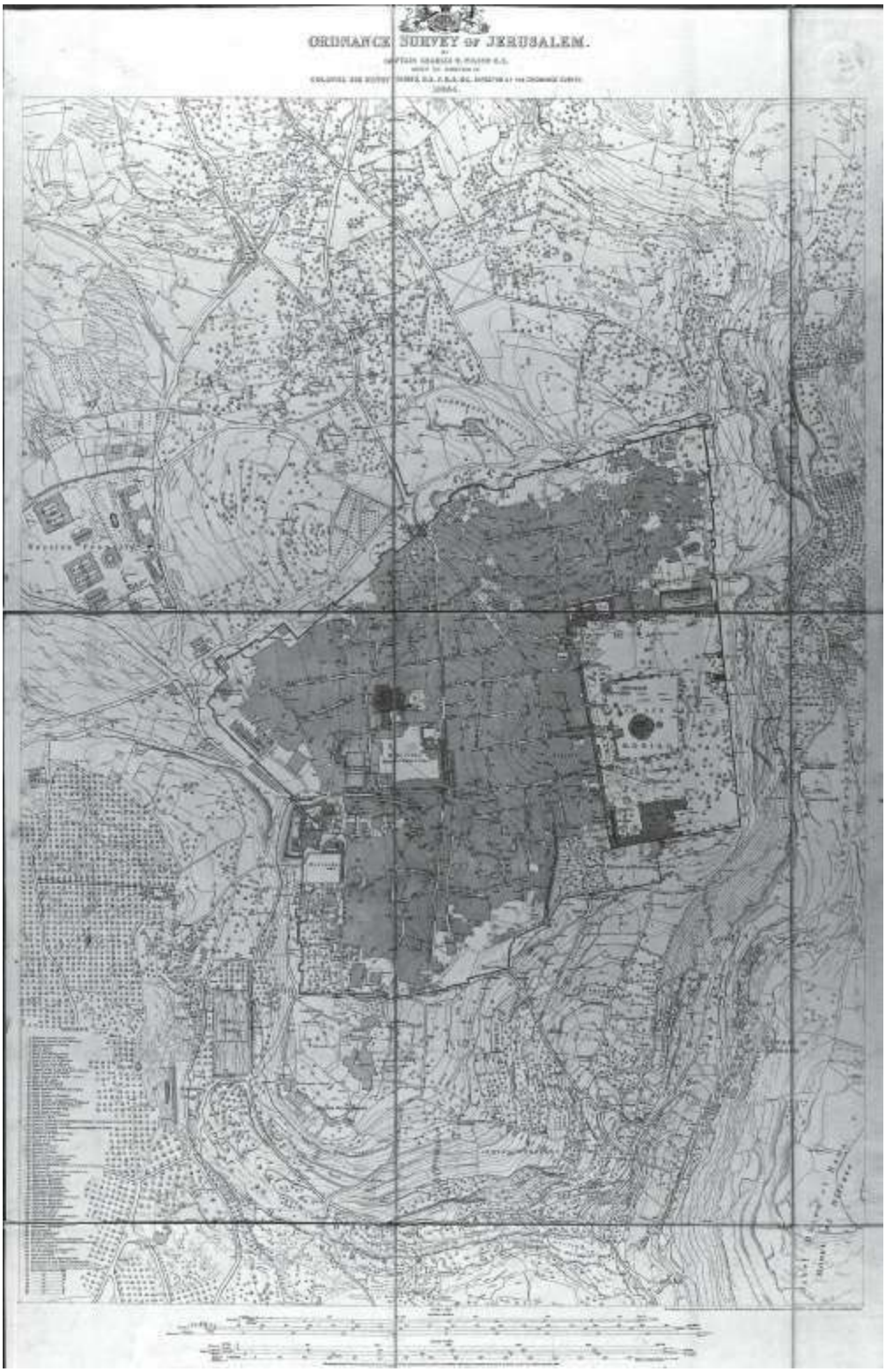
In 1864 the British decided to increase their possession of Jerusalem both for Empire and for God. In 1745 King George II had commissioned the first military survey of Scotland to aid in tackling the Jacobite revolt, and in 1790, in anticipation of a French invasion, a full military survey was made of Britain. By the mid-nineteenth century military surveys were key instruments of imperial expansion. However, the decision to make a full survey of Jerusalem was far from the norm: it was the only city outside the British Empire to be so documented. This stemmed as much from the enthusiasm of a small number of highly influential individuals as from larger military concerns.

The Pierotti book came to the attention of the writer George Grove,[38] who was angered that the work of his friend John Ferguson had been used without attribution. In a letter to *The Times* in 1864, he accused Pierotti of plagiarism. Grove's dissatisfaction with the Italian's book was part of the impetus for his pressing for a proper professional survey of the city. The subject was just too important, and Grove had influential friends. Philanthropist Baroness Angela Georgina Burdett-Coutts, heiress to Coutts Bank, had visited Jerusalem and come to the view that it needed a reliable water supply, and she would help pay for it. Her acquaintance Grove persuaded her that a survey was necessary before such a project could be undertaken, and this led to the formation of a committee and an extraordinary meeting between the Dean of Westminster and the Secretary of War.

Captain Charles W. Wilson R.E. carried out the actual survey, under the direction of Colonel Sir Henry James, Director of the Ordnance Survey[39] (Figure 8.9). James wrote in the introduction to the published work:

> The Survey of Jerusalem was undertaken with the sanction of the Right Hon. Earl de Grey and Ripon, Secretary of State for War, in compliance with the request of the Very Rev. Dean Stanley; who, on the part of a Committee interested in endeavoring to improve the sanitary state of the city, requested his Lordship to allow a survey of it to be made under my direction, with all the accuracy and detail of the Ordnance Survey of this country….

Figure 8.9 *Plan of the Town and Environs of Jerusalem.*



Although it must have been unusual for the Dean of Westminster or any cleric to approach the Secretary of War with such a request, such a survey must have been seen as in the Britain's strategic interest. However, Baroness

Coutts paid for it all. James' introduction continues:

> I also made application through the Foreign Office for a letter to be sent to the Turkish Government, requesting that instructions might be sent to the Governor of Jerusalem to afford Capt. Wilson and the party every assistance and protection in the execution of their work; and our thanks are due to his Excellency Izzet Pasha, for the cordial manner in which, under his orders, they were enabled to enter the Mosque of Omar, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Citadel, and other public buildings, and to make minute surveys of them.

It is of note that even in official communication with the Turks the Dome of the Rock is called the Mosque of Omar.

The granting of this request is a clear indication of the hold Britain had over the Ottoman Sultan. Surprisingly, the introduction also thanks Sir Moses Montefiore for letters of introduction to the leading Jews in the city,[40] an indication of the rapidly emerging interest among European Jewry in Palestine. Montefiore, a force in the Jewish resettlement in Palestine Jerusalem, had persuaded the Turkish sultan to extend to Jews the maximum privileges enjoyed by aliens. In all its aspects—the mapping, the evocative photographs by Sergeant James McDonald (Figure 8.10), and the descriptive texts—this Ordnance Survey remains the definitive document on Jerusalem in the nineteenth century. Much of the text is devoted to the Haram. In attempting to understand the water supply, Baroness Coutts' reason for funding the work, the team examined 20 cisterns beneath the Temple platform, reporting both the depth of each and whether it was wet or dry. “Entering such passages appears manageable,” James commented, “getting out was much more difficult.” There was much interest in the floor of the cave beneath the Dome. James wrote that it “is paved with marble, and produces a hollow sound when stamped upon, not merely over the mouth of the supposed well, but over nearly the whole surface.” (See Plate 24.)

Figure 8.10 The Dome of the Rock, photograph by Sergeant J.M. McDonald and P. Bergheim, from the *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem*, 1865.

The Dome of the Rock was in a ruinous condition. Again from the introduction:

> The “Kubbat-as-Sakhra” [Dome of the Rock], has been so frequently repaired and covered by various decorations, that it is difficult to say what belongs to the original building. However, westerly gales outside and Turkish carelessness within are rapidly reducing the Mosque to its original state; no attempt has been made of late years to carry out any repairs, and each succeeding winter sees the fall of larger portions of marble, fayence, and mosaic work, which are carefully collected and locked up till Allah shall send money to put them in their place again, or what is more probable till they disappear through bolts and locks by the mysterious agency of western “bakhshish.”[41]

The walls stripped of the tiles are clearly visible in the photographs.[42] It continues:

> Three periods of workmanship can be traced, of which the first and oldest is far superior to the others both in elegance of design and quality of manufacture; the second is also very good, and specimens of it may be seen in two or three places in the city, where, in the Armenian church of St. James, it shows to better advantage than when beside the finer work on the Mosque; the third period is that of the later repairs which have been made in bad taste and with worse material.

Piecemeal restoration had begun in 1853, but in 1874, as if in response to the report of the Survey, Sultan Abdulziz replaced all the tiles on the southwest and west side of the Dome.

The Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF)

Though the Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem was limited to reporting the facts, its findings heightened the curiosity of those who had financed it. In 1865 these same individuals convened to create a scholarly society whose mission was (and remains!) the scientific study of the Holy Land—the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Colonel Henry James' concluded his preface to the Survey with an announcement:

> Since the completion of this survey a Society has been formed under the patronage of Her Majesty the Queen,[43] which is called the “Palestine Exploration Fund,” the first meeting of which was held on the 22nd June 1865, his Grace the Archbishop of York in the chair, and I am much gratified to state that, from the very satisfactory manner in which Capt. Wilson carried out my instructions for the survey of Jerusalem, the levelling to the Dead Sea, etc., he has been selected to go out as the chief director of the explorations to be made by the new society….

He added that “Though I am deeply interested in the success of this new expedition, in my official capacity [I] have nothing whatever to do with it…”

It was again George Grove with Arthur Stanley, the same Dean of Westminster who organized a meeting in Westminster abbey in May 1865.

They agreed that “That an association be formed under the title of Palestine Exploration Fund for the purpose of investigating the Archaeology, Geography, Geology and Natural History of Palestine.” A public meeting was held a month later, chaired by the Archbishop of York, to formally establish the Society and set the principles upon which its activities would be conducted. These were “That whatever was undertaken should be carried be out on scientific principles: That the Society as a body should abstain from controversy. And thirdly that it should not be started, nor should it be conducted as a religious society.”

The aforementioned aristocrat and scholar Marquis Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé was present and urged the gathering to “put aside all exaggerated or national or ecclesiastical feeling.” Funds were raised, including a small sum from Queen Victoria and the first declared task was to be a “complete and detailed survey map of Palestine.” The Ordnance Survey had been limited to Jerusalem. This was quickly amended in favor of the many subscribers who wanted the effort to concentrate on the holy places in Jerusalem and in particular Temple Mount. They also wanted answers; “What was the exact location of the Jewish Temple, as built by Solomon and finally destroyed by the Romans under Titus? What was the exact date of the construction of the Dome of the Rock?” The wealthy architectural amateur James Ferguson, subscriber to the PEF, (and plagiarized friend of Grove) was adamant that the Dome of the Rock was in fact Constantine's Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and that Solomon's Temple had stood on the southeast corner of the Haram.

The expedition was under the direction of the same Captain Charles W. Wilson, R.E., who had been in charge of the Ordnance Survey, but he chose a 27-year-old lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, Charles Warren, to lead the expedition. [44]

Sir Charles Warren arrived without the military authority that had given the Survey such access to the Haram. As he later wrote “My instructions desired me to excavate about the Noble Sanctuary, my vizieral letter [from the *vizier*, the Turkish administrator] strictly forbade such work; and yet, in the teeth of this letter, in direct opposition to the pasha's orders and contrary to the advice of the Consul I succeeded in carrying out the instructions of the Fund.” Those who knew him said it was all done by charm.

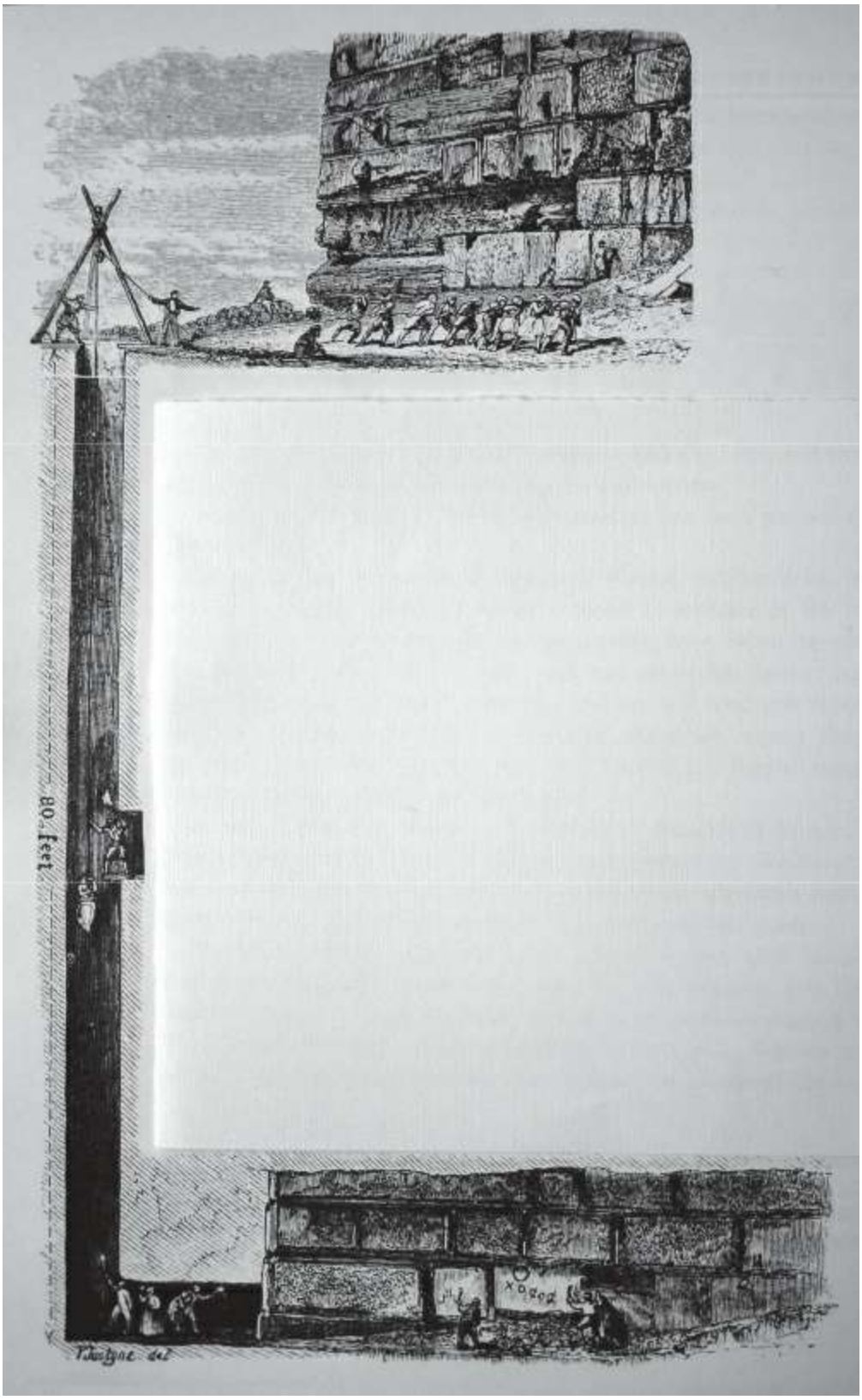
He would later write

> Nor can we wonder that the Turk should refuse a stranger leave to dig quite close to his cherished sanctum. Even the Dean of Westminster, so valuable a co-operator on the committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, would be reluctant to allow a Turkish officer of Engineers to dig by the east buttresses of Westminster Abbey.[45]

From 1867 until he returned to England in 1870, Warren engaged his task with intensity, and no one, before or since, has been allowed to devote such time and effort to examining the structures beneath the platform of Temple Mount. The results remain the most complete record of what is there.

Warren's previous experience had been maintaining the British defenses in Gibraltar. Though he was the first agent of the PEF, lack of money from London was as much a problem as gaining access to the Haram. He was forbidden to dig on the surface, but was allowed to excavate deep inspection shafts close to Herod's walls: these were three to four feet across and lined with wooden mining cases. When these reached bedrock, he would tunnel laterally until he came to the ancient walls. Thus he discovered that in places almost half of the height of the Temple walls lay buried beneath the present surface. He sunk a shaft across from the trace that was Robinson's Arch and found the supporting pier and wedge-shaped stones of what had been an arch (Figure 8.11). He sketched a reconstruction of what he believed had been a part of a large stairway supported on piers and arches that had led out of the southwest corner of Herod's Stoa (a reconstruction long forgotten until confirmed by Israeli archeologists in the 1960s). He gained the trust of the Waqf, the Islamic foundation which administered the mosque and shrines, and was gradually allowed to enter and explore the complex network of cisterns, tunnels, and caves beneath the surface. Their existence had always been known but they had never been carefully explored and measured. The scholars of the Waqf had either little curiosity on what lay beneath the platform or believed that it was not part of the life of Muhammad.

Figure 8.11 Warren's section, an animated illustration of the means by which both the workers and Warren's guests made their way to the excavation.



Warren's own words give a vigorous sense of how he approached the task:

> I was visiting inside the Dome of the Rock one day, when I observed that there was something peculiar about the northern portion of the rock. It was early; true Moslems were otherwise engaged; and seizing my opportunity when quite unobserved, I vaulted over the high railing which enclosed this morsel of Paradise, and examined it. The rock presents a large surface, but I directed my attention particularly to one point, where I found two pieces of flagging lying north and south, in the continuation of a known cutting on the surface; at one place I could just get my hand in between, and found that there was a hollow.
>
> Accordingly, I made arrangements for visiting the great dome in the morning a few days after, and carried with me, concealed in my sleeve, a small iron lever, just the length of my arm… I…again vaulted over the railing, scrambled up to the piece of flagging, and put the lever to prise it up… I was committing sacrilege
>
> After about three minutes the flagging began to loosen, and I was able to get my fingers under it; but it was of too great weight for one man… I was quite unable with my right arm to keep up the stone, and it fell with a crash into the hole below, causing an echo which shook the building and reverberated all over the place.
>
> All this time my Moslem friend was in agonies of terror, and conjured me to make haste: and at last, when I let go of the stone, he became frantic declared that we should all get murdered, and I must go at once…
>
> I wanted to go on again to try to put the stone in his place, when he became as frantic as ever. Asking his reasons, he replied, “If you are found on the rock there is only one thing that can happen; but if only the stone is found displaced, who can suppose that you have done it? It is Allah who has thrown it down.”[46]

Charles Wilson reported on both the survey and Warren's expedition in *The Recovery of Jerusalem*, published in 1871. This was not well received by Warren, who believed that Wilson, perhaps deliberately, had minimized his achievements. In 1874 Warren published his own account *Underground Jerusalem*, in which he expressed the view that the PEF's unwillingness to fully recognize his achievements and publish the findings was because he, Warren, refused to validate the theories of James Ferguson, refused to state

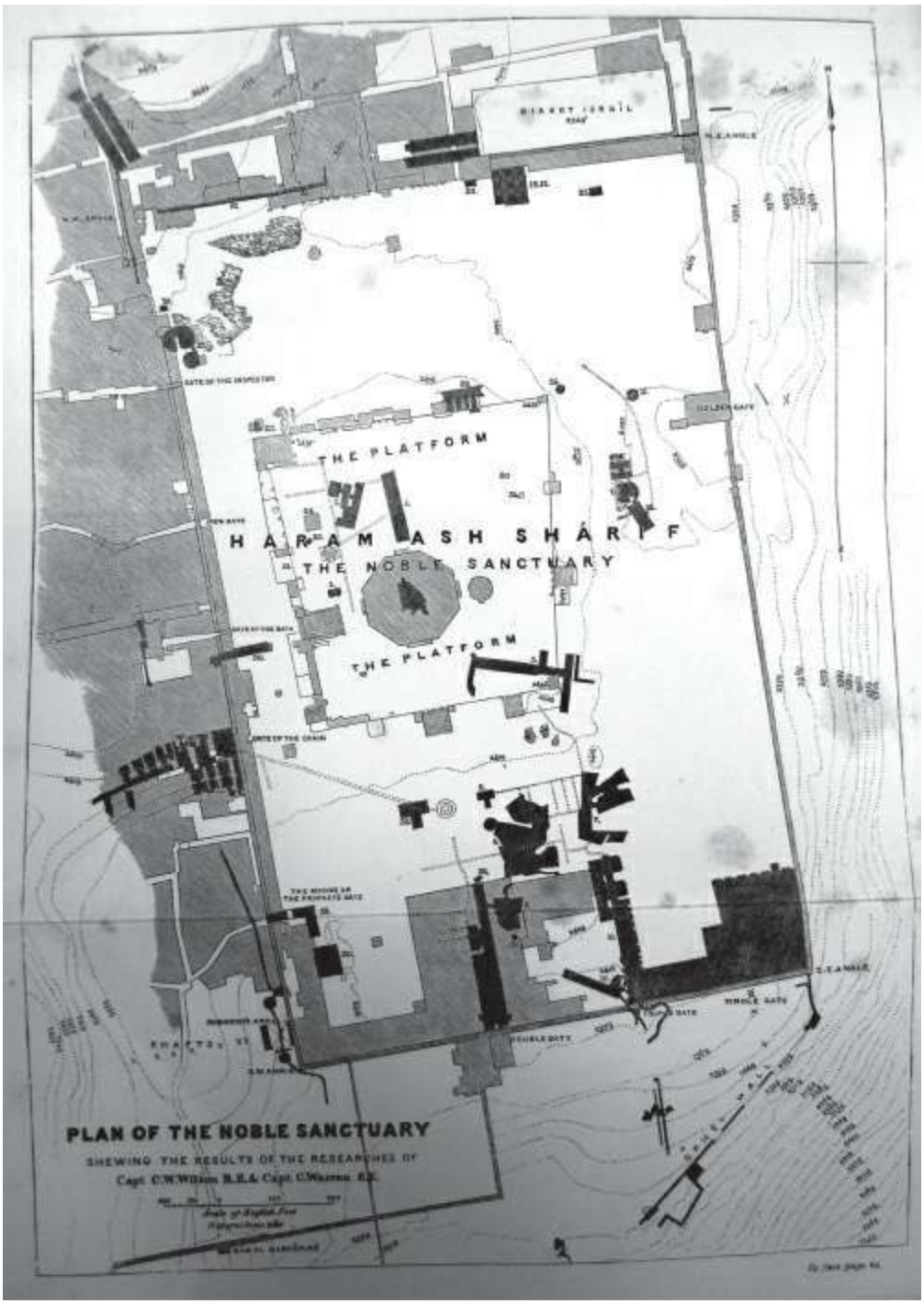
that Constantine had built the Dome of the Rock.

For all his whimsy Warren was an excellent engineer and in preparing for the project had become a committed biblical scholar. He reports in *Underground Jerusalem* of measuring every opening he could find a way into, wading through water immersing the detritus of millennia and then translating the measurements to the drawings. He was passionate in his efforts to connect the evidence below the platform with what might have existed above. In trying to understand the two regular passages beneath the most likely location of the Solomon's Sanctuary, he placed his imagination in the Hebrew texts of Temple rituals:

> Rabbi Eleazer, the son of Jacob, said that in the gallery that went under the *Chel*, he passed out through *Tadi*. It is clear that the passage to the House of Baptism was down in some underground vault and further accounts describe a winding staircase from the north-west room of the *Mokad*.
>
> [He continues that tunnels marked Nos. I. and IV.]…appear to be exactly applicable to this description…in the point where *Tadi* is supposed to be in the north wall of the temple area and in the *Mokad* passage there is an off chamber where I conjecture the bath was placed. The tunnels are rock cut, and were evidently formerly passages, though now used as tanks.

He produced an exact mapping of what he had found, and his precise descriptions of every passage and cavern beneath Temple Mount, places long since forbidden to any non-Muslim, continue to fascinate (Figure 8.12). As powerful as this plan are the watercolor paintings of these subterranean areas by a colleague of Warren's, William “Crimea” Simpson, who was sent out by the *Illustrated London News* in 1869 to provide illustrations that would popularize the discoveries. He was called “Crimea” because he made his reputation as an illustrator on the Crimean War. All told, map, texts and paintings are marvelous records and remain tempting and illusive: the imagination persistently seeking connection between seemingly random traces and long-lost ancient structures (Plates 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30).

Figure 8.12 Warren's survey plan of the Haram. The dark areas map the underground chambers.


THE PLATFORM
H A R A M A S H S H A R I F
THE NOBLE SANCTUARY
THE PLATFORM
PLAN OF THE NOBLE SANCTUARY
SHEWING THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCHES BY

In lively as well as scholarly fashion, Warren summed up his achievements:

I have put the whole subject of the topography on a new footing; that many of the mere conjectures are now certainties, that some of the strongest theories have been proved in error; that whereas nothing was certain but the Mount of Olives and Moriah, now there is a plan of the

Temple courts, founded on existing remains…

> We have been able to point out the work of King Herod, and the work of Solomon, and if it were necessary we could identify the additions and alterations of the Roman emperors. We can follow the descriptions of Josephus and the Talmudic accounts and find everything fall into its place with the ease and felicity only to be obtained from correct identifications. We can stand on the spot where the sacrifices were made where the high priest stood once a year before the ark of the mercy seat where St. Simeon received our lord where the Sanhedrin received his questions where the moneychangers' tables were over turned where the lame man was made whole where St. Paul was carried up the steps to the Antonia where St. James the Just stood before he was cast down.[47]

He ended by thanking the ladies, particularly those who had gone down the shafts with him to see the evidence for themselves, whose donations had help print the book "which the Palestine Exploration Fund cannot afford to publish." The book was a great success.

PEF[48] activity was not limited to Warren's exploration; the organization actively engaged many of the most respected biblical scholars in Jerusalem in their projects. The directors of the Fund became keenly interested in Conrad Schick when it was learned that he was building a model of the Haram for the Turkish pavilion at Great Exhibition in Vienna in 1873 believing this project could be pretext for further exploration beneath the platform. Between 1873 and 1875, Schick did explore further and built a model of what he found. These were the years in which the Ottoman authorities began much-needed repairs on the Haram and this by necessity brought builders and engineers (some European) on to the Temple platform. It was in the process of restoring the tiled walls of the Dome that the French archeologist and agent of the PEF Charles Clermont-Ganneau, discovered the arches in the parapet of the outer wall, which was reported in an elegant book of his findings produced by the Fund.

If only in denial, the PEF was also involved in the most outrageous attempt by Europeans to cut through the floor of the chamber beneath the Dome of The Rock. In their last *Quarterly Statement*[49] for 1909 they disavowed any connection with what they called this "English Party of amateurs" on Ophel. The "party" was led by one Captain Montague Brownslow Parker, later Fifth

Earl of Morley, and included engineers, perhaps military. The inspiration for the mission came from a Finnish poet Walter Juvelius who claimed in deciphering the book of Ezekiel to have found a text giving the location of the Ark of the Covenant–it was in a cave outside the city, accessible only by a secret tunnel. If found they thought it would be worth a fortune. The Captain was able to raise £25,000 sterling to mount an expedition. Permission was obtained from the Ottomans in Istanbul (two high officials from the Sultan's Court were promised half of the treasure). In August 1909 Parker arrived in Jerusalem where the Turkish governor was also a willing investor.

They were an aggressively independent group, and while the French archeologists were invited to be witnesses, the English and Germans were excluded. In two years the Parker team cleaned out the Giphon tunnel (Silwan Spring), a discovery that increased knowledge of early settlement and its water supply, and produced the most complete excavation and measured survey of the tunnels, but no treasure. It was the treasure Parker had come for. He decided that Juvelius was mistaken, these tunnels did not connect to Temple Mount and if the Ark was anywhere, it was there. One night in April of 1911, after more bribery, and dressed in local garb, Parker and crew entered Temple Mount and began to dig through the surface of the platform into one of the wells that Warren had so completely explored forty years earlier. The digging awoke a guard sleeping nearby who rushed into the street crying that the infidels were destroying their most sacred precinct. There was chaos in the lanes leading to the Haram. Fearing for his life the governor called out the troops as rioting spread throughout the old city. Parker escaped, only to be arrested in Jaffa, and escaped again, this time to his yacht in the harbor, in which he sailed home.

From the early part of the twentieth century digs became more scientific, less the work of individuals more of organized missions sent by scientific bodies and governments. The American School for Oriental Research was founded in 1900, and emulated the PEF. Its mission was shaped by William Fellows Albright, whose major concern was substantiating the authenticity of the Bible. The first Jewish archeological project in Jerusalem was conducted by Raymond Weill in 1913–1914, financed by Baron Edmund Rothschild.

Yet, while events moved with increasingly violent force around it, the Haram and its many structures remained in a world of their own and silent.

Jerusalem and World War I

T. E. Lawrence—Lawrence of Arabia—was on a commission for the Palestine Exploration Fund when war broke out. He was leading an archeological expedition in the Negev Desert, so it is rather surprising that he was able so quickly to enlist local tribes in supporting an Arab force in attacking the Turks.

In October 1917 the British General Allenby led the Egyptian Expeditionary Force into Palestine. On November 2, 1917 the British government issued the Balfour Declaration; Lord Arthur James Balfour was the British Foreign Secretary, and the Declaration came in a letter to Lionel Walter Rothschild, 2nd Baron Rothschild, a leader of British Jewry. It stated:

> His majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing and non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

As Prime Minister (1902–1905), Balfour had sought to curb Jewish immigration into Britain warning of the “undoubted evils” that would arise from an immigration that was largely Jewish. However, he was intensely religious and, according to his biographer, had a profound appreciation of the influence of the Old Testament on Christian thought. It was a meeting with Chaim Weizmann in 1906 that laid the basis for his ardent belief in the need for a Jewish homeland. Weizmann (who would become the first president of Israel) was a research chemist who had only recently arrived from Russia and quickly become prominent in Zionist circles in Britain. The meeting was to discuss a very deliberate government proposal that a Jewish homeland be established in British East Africa (roughly present-day Kenya), which Zionists strongly objected to. In the two hours they were together Weizmann succeeded in persuading Balfour that the homeland could only be in Palestine. During World War I it was Balfour who urged the British government to engage with Zionist leaders, actively working with Weizmann and US Chief Justice Louis Brandeis to advance the cause. Thus, the Declaration was the result of a decade of thought and political action.[50] Its

content stunned the Arab Palestinians who had fought so hard with the British to defeat the Turks in the belief that the land would at last be theirs. On Sunday December 29, 1917 the Turkish forces were driven out of Jerusalem and two days later Allenby, with the commanders of French and Italian detachments, entered the city on foot through the Jaffa Gate. This was followed shortly by a proclamation of martial law.

> To the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Blessed and the People Dwelling in Its Vicinity:The defeat inflicted upon the Turks by the troops under my command has resulted in the occupation of your city by my forces. I, therefore, here now proclaim it to be under martial law, under which form of administration it will remain so long as military considerations make necessary. However, lest any of you be alarmed by reason of your experience at the hands of the enemy who has retired, I hereby inform you that it is my desire that every person pursue his lawful business without fear of interruption. Furthermore, since your city is regarded with affection by the adherents of three of the great religions of mankind and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore, do I make it known to you that every sacred building, monument, holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer of whatsoever form of the three religions will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faith they are sacred.

It concluded:

> The hereditary custodians at the gates of the Holy Sepulchre have been requested to take up their accustomed duties in remembrance of the magnanimous act of the Caliph Omar, who protected that church.

The British presence meant that for the first time in 400 years all the places sacred to Christianity were free from the control of Islam. Yet the British were equally protective of the Islamic sites and began an extensive restoration of the Haram. The British chose C. R. Ashbee, disciple of Ruskin and Morris (and a prime mover in the English Arts and Crafts Movement), to lead the restoration of the Dome and al-Aqsa. It could have been an inspired choice. He concentrated on producing the tiles to replace those on the Dome, enlisting an Armenian ceramicist from Aleppo. The fruits of their production

were applied to many buildings in the old city but never to the Dome.[51]

The city and Palestine would remain under British authority until 1948.[52]

Notes

[1] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 467.

[2] They began in Venice and en route to Palestine sailed by the islands of Corfu and Rhodes. After Jerusalem, they traveled by Mount Sinai to Cairo and then sailed down the Nile. On returning, Breydenbach was named Dean of Mainz Cathedral. He dictated the text to a fellow-cleric. It was first published in Mainz, Germany in 1486 and became a great popular success, going into eight editions in Latin, French, Flemish, and Spanish, as well as German, before 1501, with four further editions by 1522. It was the first illustrated travel book. (With each edition it appears that the increasingly precious wood blocks would travel from printer to printer across Europe.) Artists, woodblock cutters, and printers could well be one and the same person, and, as Reuwich is on record as being both artist and printer, it can be assumed that he also cut the blocks. These illustrations are the first documented use of cross-hatching in a woodcut.

[3] Such descriptions had only been attempted in the work of a few major painters, most notably Jan Van Eyck's portrayal of a Flemish city in *The Virgin of Chancellor Rolin*, from 1435.

[4] Recent scholarly restorations of the façade correspond very closely to the Reuwich image.

[5] Illustrated and engraved primarily by Michael Wohlgemuth, with a young Albrecht Dürer and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff.

[6] *Liber Chronicarum* was printed and published by Anton Koberger, the most successful publisher in Europe at the end of the fifteenth century. By 1489, he owned 24 printing presses and employed approximately 100 operatives, with offices from Lyon to Budapest. Only this scale of operation could have undertaken such a work; the most lavishly illustrated book of the time and the first to successfully integrate illustrations and text. Initially, 2500 copies were produced in both Latin and German, a number almost equal to the elite, literate audience of the time. A less expensive edition aimed at a broader audience was printed in Augsburg in 1497.

[7] In Folio XI: VIII.

[8] Variations in spelling result from the medieval practice of contracting words.

[9] Bunting (1545–1606) was a professor of theology at Hanover, but had a falling out with the church.

[10] "Travel to the Land of Israel by a disciple of Ovadiah of Bertinoro," in Lawrence Fine, ed.(2001), *Judaism in Practice: From the Middle Ages Through the Early Modern Period*, p. 245. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[11] Their major work, *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, comprised 540 pictorial maps of cities across Europe.

[12] *Hierosolyma, urbs sancta. Iudaeae, totiusque Orientis longe clarissima, qua amplitudine ac magnificentia hoc nostro aevo conspicua est*

[13] Peters, *Jerusalem*, p. 462. It continues "Then they fixed his head, which had been severed from his body, on a very long pole, and hanging his clothes on another pole, they bore them away on high; the body, however, with great derision they brought to this square, and having brought bundles of wood from all sides, they burned it."

[14] All the way into the nineteenth century, as measured by the images printers chose to publish, the idealized Jerusalem of Villalpando and van Adrichem remained more interesting to the popular imagination than views of the actual city.

[15] Encouraged by the problems he suffered when someone with his exact name attempted to assassinate a national leader.

[16] Prints from the same period such as Pierre Aveline's *IERUSALEM Comme elle est a present* continue to be based on variations of older material. Aveline owed much to the 200-year-old view from Reuwich.

[17] Earlier artists must have faced the same problem but only Bruyn described his deception.

[18] In *Reizen van Cornelis de Bruyn, door de vermaardste Deelen van Klein Asia… Syrien en Palastina* (*Travels by Cornelis de Bruyn through the most famous parts of Asia Minor… Syria and Palestine*).

[19] F. E. Peters, 1993, *The Distant Shrine*, p. 219 © *1993 AMS Press New*

York, with permission.

[20] In vol. II it also bears the name of Thos. Jeffrys, an important London map engraver.

[21] He used the same techniques in producing the first apparently modern maps of the Valley of the Kings.

[22] Napoleon's scientific mission, which accompanied the invasion of Egypt, resulted in the publication of the *Description de l'Egypte*; discovery of the Rosetta Stone had created widespread interest in Egypt across Europe.

[23] When young he was sued after an affair with a married woman and finally had to flee England after being seen having sex with a soldier in a London park.

[24] In this he was assisted by the fabulous Giovanni Belzoni, almost seven feet in height, a circus performer once billed as the “Patagonia Samson,” who would break into tombs with a battering ram and then walk, as he said, on “golden-plated mummies as thick as leaves in *Vallambrosa*.” Although translating hieroglyphs was not a major interest, Bankes is credited with having identified the word “Cleopatra” on the Philae obelisk, which became the key for the decipherment of the Rosetta Stone by the French scholar Jean-François Champollion. The obelisk now stands on the lawns of his house in Dorset, Kingston Lacy.

[25] His mentor Burckhardt, dressed likewise, traveled under the name Sheikh Ibrahim.

[26] Written to a fellow architect and illustrator W. H. Bartlett. Source: Victor W. Von Hagen (1950), *F. Catherwood 1799–1854: Architect-Explorer of Two Worlds*. Barre, MA: Barre Publishers.

[27] Catherwood's work in the Middle East was overshadowed by the brilliant illustrations from his explorations of eastern Mexico. In *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, and in *Views of Ancient Monuments in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatan*, published in 1841 and 1843, these presented Mayan civilization to the world. He died in a shipping disaster in 1854.

[28] Noted on the drawing, *Plan of Jerusalem: Sketched from Sieber and Catherwood, Corrected by the Measurements of Robinson and Smith*.

[29] Crusaders named al-Aqsa, *Palatium, Porticus seu Templum Salomonis*.

[30] Edward Robinson, Eli Smith and Others (1856), *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Regions: A Journal of Travels in the Years 1838 & 1852*, Vol. I Section IV, Jerusalem: Incidents and First Impressions. London: John Murray.

[31] Evidence from Josephus *Wars of the Jews*, VI: 6.2—"he placed himself on the western side of the outer [court of the] temple; for there were gates on that side above the Xystus, and a bridge that connected the upper city to the temple. This bridge it was that lay between the tyrants and Caesar, and parted them."

[32] In this same period the Swiss Titus Tobler discovered an arch which later became known as Wilson's Arch.

[33] James Turner Barclay (1858), *The City of the Great King*, pp. 482-3. Philadelphia: J. Challen.

[34] Or Muhammad 'Ali Pasha al-Mas'ud ibn Agha, who emerged to become the founder of modern Egypt and *Wali* of Egypt Sudan and Syria.

[35] The Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1838, forced "free trade" in Egypt. Ali was forced to abandon his protective economic policies and was unable to control the flood of cheap manufactured imports that decimated local industries. The Treaty of 1841 stripped Ali of all his conquered territory except Sudan but granted him the hereditary governorship of Egypt for life, forming a ruling dynasty that lasted into the middle of the twentieth century.

[36] *Plan of the Town of and Environs of Jerusalem* Copies by permission of Field Marshal The Marquis of Anglesey. K.G, G C H., Master of the Ordinance, from the Original Drawing of the Survey Made in the Month of March 1841 by Lieut's Aldrich and Symonds Royal Engineers Under the Orders of Lieut. Colonel Anderson, Commanding Royal Engineers in Syria. Text added by the Rev. G Williams BD Fellow of Kings College Cambridge, and the Rev. Robert Willis MA FRS, Jackson Professor of that University. Sold by James Wyld, Geographer to the Queen.

[37] This was corrected somewhat in 1862 in the survey made by the French scholar Marquis Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé years before he produced his reconstruction of Herod's temple

[38] Secretary to the Crystal Palace, writer on music; later creator of the *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* that still bears his name.

[39] Sgt. James Mcdonald R.E. and P. Bergheim, *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem*. London, Her Majesty's Treasury, 1865.

Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem, made with the sanction of the Right Hon. Earl de Grey and Ripon, secretary of state for war, by Captain Charles W. Wilson, R.E., under the direction of Colonel Sir Henry James…director of the Ordnance Survey. Pub. by authority of the lords commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury. (London, H.M. Stationery Office. G.E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode, printers, 1865.

[40] It also records with gratitude the reduced rates given to the surveyors by the P & O Line sailing to and from Alexandria.

[41] *Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem*.

[42] The photographer was Sergeant James McDonald, who, James stated, "is both a very good surveyor and a very good photographer."

[43] Queen Victoria, still in mourning after the death of her husband, must have known of, and possibly approved, the survey. She knew Dean Stanley, who had accompanied her son the Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, on his visit to Jerusalem in 1862, during which Ottoman Sultan allowed the Prince and his entourage access to the Haram and all its buildings, the first such official permission.

[44] *Underground Jerusalem: An Account of Some of the Principal Difficulties Encountered in its Exploration and the Results Obtained*. Charles Warren, Captain in the Corps of the Royal Engineers. Late in Charge of Explorations in the Holy Land. Bentley, London, 1876.

[45] *Underground Jerusalem*.

[46] *Underground Jerusalem*, pp. 402–407.

[47] *Underground Jerusalem*.

[48] The PEF was not alone exploring Palestine; the *Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas* (German Society for the Exploration of Palestine) was founded in 1877. The *École Biblique et Archéologique Français de Jerusalem* was founded by the Dominicans in 1890.

[49] A publication that still continues as the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*.

[50] Some saw the Declaration as a product of the desperate state of the war on the Western Front. Weizmann had developed a new method for producing acetone, essential to the production of cordite, the propellant for

artillery shells. Without ample supplies Britain could have lost World War I; Weizmann did contribute the process to the British war effort.

[51] Beatrice St. Laurent and Andra Riedlmayer (1993), “Restorations of the Dome of the Rock and their Political Significance, 1537–1928,” *Muqarnas*, 10, *Essays in Honor of Oleg Grabar*, pp. 76–84.

[52] Surprisingly, there were few important expeditions in Jerusalem during the British Mandate (1918–1948) though the PEF continued its activity. The Hebrew Society conducted many digs for the Research of Israel and its Antiquities Society, founded just as war as breaking out by a group of Jewish intellectuals. The Society's activities were disrupted by the war but resumed in 1920, when it became known as the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society. During the period of the British Mandate, it was responsible for the first archeological excavations ever conducted by a Jewish organization in Palestine, at Hammat Tiberias Absalom's tomb and the Third Wall in Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel, Beth-Shearim, and Beth-Yerah. It was later renamed The Israel Exploration Society (IES).

Chapter 9

Al-Haram Al-Sharif

In moving into the present it is necessary to set the fate of the Haram—Temple Mount—within the larger political context that leads to war and to the intractable and conflicted condition of Palestine, Israel and Jerusalem today. By necessity the narrative shifts from a concern with the place, or best call it the stage—both imagined and real—to the actors and the succession of unpredictable performances that continue to play out into the present. The events that follow increase in speed and complexity and are still unfolding. They have been written about exhaustively, so only the headlines concern us here.

The Path to Conflict

During Passover in 1920, inflamed by rumors of abuses of Islam by the Jews, the Arab population rioted. Jews were murdered in their homes and in the streets. It was remembered as "Bloody Passover." It revealed a violent Arab opposition to the Mandate and to Jews. One of the leaders of the protest, Haj Amin al-Husayni, was arrested and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. However in 1921, impressed by his ability to influence the Sunni community, the British released him and appointed him *Mufti* of Jerusalem, the highest official of Sunni religious law. He was the youngest ever. The Jewish community was astonished. Shortly thereafter a Jewish paramilitary organization *Haganah* (Hebrew for "Defense"), was formed.

In 1922 Mufti al-Husayni was elected President of the newly formed Supreme Muslim Council, which controlled the Waqf funds devoted in great part to maintaining al-Haram al-Sharif.[1] Also in 1922, the League of Nations approved the articles defining the intentions behind the British Mandate. Article 2 stated that Palestine be placed under such "political, administrative

and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home…and the development of self-governing institutions." Such a divisive proposition could not be imposed forever and it was clear to both Arab and Jew that no matter what the Mandate intended, the future would be shaped by the ethnic group with the largest population, and holding the most land.

The Dome of the Rock was badly shaken during an earthquake in July 1927, undoing much of the work of Ashbee and others. The Mufti was very successful in raising money for the restoration: it came in from across the Middle East and as far away as India. This greatly increased his popularity. Walls were repaired, roofs stabilized, gardens replanted and the Dome covered in a new film of gold.

In August 1929 a worldwide agency was created dedicated to the establishment of a Jewish homeland, which eventually became the World Zionist Organization. And in the same August the Mufti[2] attacked Jews in his sermons, using the unresolved dispute over the West Wall. He was reported to have called out "*Itback al-Yahud*"– "Slaughter the Jews!" His agents spread a variety of rumors across the old town, claiming that Jews had killed Arabs, had burned down al-Aqsa Mosque, were planning to attack the Dome of the Rock and build a synagogue near the Wailing Wall. On August 23 an inflamed Arab mob descended upon Jewish Jerusalem and in the following week violence spread throughout Palestine. By the time British reinforcements arrived 133 Jews had been killed, 339 wounded (mostly by Arabs); compared with 116 Arabs killed and 232 wounded (mostly by British-commanded police and soldiers). In many of the disturbances the British military chose not to intervene on either side. They viewed the riots as arising from the simple fact that "the Arabs have come to see in Jewish immigration not only a menace to their livelihood but a possible overlord of the future.[3]"

In 1930, a British parliamentary "White Paper" called for a halt to Jewish immigration to Palestine. Immigration had jumped from 30,000 in 1933 to 61,000 in 1935, and by 1936 the Jews made up almost one-third of total population of Palestine. They were an increasingly educated and urbanised part of the population. In contrast, ninety percent of the Arab population lived in the villages and on farms.

From this point forward conflict persists, and the situation shifts in increasing confusion:

- In 1937 a British commission recommended that Palestine be partitioned. The specifics favored the Jews and called for forced deportation of Palestinians from what would become Jewish land. This, along with crop failure and high unemployment, led the Arabs in organized, violent revolt. Joined by fighters from neighboring Arab states the rebels attacked British bases and Jewish settlements in the north. Britain declared martial law, shipped in reinforcements from Britain, and fought back.
- All ended in 1939 with Arab Palestine weakened and dispirited and the Zionists emboldened.
- In 1939 threat of war led Britain to concede to Arab demands. A “White Paper” proposed a Jewish homeland be established in an independent Palestine, with Palestinian Arabs having some control over the scale of Jewish immigration. This was rejected both Arabs and Jews and it marked the end of Zionist–British cooperation.
- Throughout the Second World War—1939–1945—Arab Palestine remained quiet; the revolt had seriously weakened Arab leadership
- In 1945, with the war's end, the critical issue was once again Jewish immigration. The revelations of the holocaust caused the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives to demand unrestricted Jewish immigration to Palestine within economic reason.

And the conflict widened. Though the British Mandate of Palestine was expected to last through 1948, the extremely aggressive tactics by those seeking to create a Jewish state led to British withdrawal in 1947. Britain, out of ideas and losing control, passed the problem on to the United Nations. In August, the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) recommended that the region be partitioned into two states, one Arab, one Jewish: Jerusalem and its environs to be governed by an international body. The British viewed the proposal as unworkable because the two populations were so completely intertwined, and they joined the Arab League in refusing support. The UN Commission for the administration of Palestine was created to form a transition between the British Mandate and some agreed-upon form of self rule; however, on May 14, 1948, the day before the Mandate expired,

the Jewish Agency declared the “Establishment of the State of Israel.” Within hours this was given *de facto* recognition by the United States.

Immediately, armies from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Transjordan advanced into Palestine. Except for the British-trained Arab Legion, those forces were inexperienced and poorly trained, no match for the well prepared, but newly named Israeli Army. The results were catastrophic for Islamic Palestine, as hundreds of thousands were driven from their land. At the walls of old Jerusalem, the Israeli Army advancing from the west met the Arab Legion of Transjordan. As Arabs fled from the west of the city, Jews were forced out of the Jewish quarter of the old city. A cease-fire was agreed to in November, and in 1949 there was an armistice without a peace treaty.

Jerusalem under Transjordan

The Arab Legion was under the command of Abd Allah ibn al-Husay, simply known as Abdullah, Abdullah's father Hussein, who claimed descent from the Prophet, was the grand Sharif and Amir of Mecca and hereditary custodian of the Muslim holy places.[4] From his childhood in Constantinople Abdullah had been groomed for the role of tribal chief. In 1920 he had taken the city of Amman in Jordan by force, and the British, the imperial power in region, had agreed both to recognize and subsidize his rule. In 1923 they recognized his new kingdom, Transjordan, as a national state. During the Second World War he had continued to be a strong supporter of Britain, and his Arab Legion fought as equals with British forces against the pro-Nazi regime in Iraq and the armies of the Vichy French in Syria. In 1947 Abdullah was the only Arab ruler willing to consider the partition of Palestine and he accepted the title of commander in chief of all Arab forces, he said, solely to secure the portion of Palestine that was to form an Arab state defined by the UN resolution. Just days after the end of the Mandate his army, approaching from the River Jordan, held Israeli forces at the western edge of Jerusalem and took control of the Old City and with it the Haram al-Sharif—the Noble Sanctuary.

In the midst of the battle for the Old City the remaining Jewish population sought refuge in the three synagogues just inside Israeli front lines.[5] They had

either been driven from their homes by the Arab Legion or fled from the shellfire. Eventually, one synagogue was the sole surviving defended Jewish position. The Rabbis urged surrender. The Israeli commander refused. On May 28 the Arab Legion drove two armored cars thorough the lanes of the East Jerusalem and confronted the Israeli position; it was quickly surrendered. That evening, protected from the city's Muslim population by a corridor of Arab Legionnaires, remaining Jews in the Old City, about 1300, walked the 500 yards to the Zion Gate into the new nation of Israel. Engineers of the Arab Legion then systematically began to destroy the Jewish quarter.

The following September the UN-appointed mediator between the warring parties reported on the conditions in the city during the initial truce: “The opposing forces in Jerusalem confronted each other across lines that were very close—in some places opposite sides of the same street. The mood was intense and there was frequent sniping and occasional firing of machine guns, mortars and artillery…” He further assessed progress on, among other issues, the mediation effort that was addressing the “Protection of Holy Places”:

> Authorities on both sides have tried to preserve and protect religious buildings and sites. Many religious buildings, however, are located in areas where heavy fighting has occurred, and some have been destroyed. Synagogues have been demolished in the Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Even during the present truce Jerusalem remains a critical spot where shelling by mortars and artillery in various parts of the city frequently takes place. Thus the Holy Places are in constant danger. Damage to many such structures cannot be fully repaired under existing conditions and further deterioration will occur…. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been hit once, with no appreciable damage. The Church of the Dormition in the Old City has been severely hit but its walls are still standing…. The Haram-esh-Sharif, including the Dome of the Rock, has suffered damage from shelling. Windows have been broken and inlaid work shattered.[6]

In December, Abdullah took the title of King of Jordan and in April 1949, named his country the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. East Jerusalem became de facto part of Jordan.

On December 26, 1949, Western Jerusalem, or Jerusalem west of the

armistice line, was pronounced the capital of the new nation of Israel. A decision that went unrecognized by much of the world. The first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion, declared: “Jerusalem is an inseparable part of Israel, and her eternal capital. No United Nations vote can alter that historic fact.”

On July 20, 1951, as he entered al-Aqsa Mosque for Friday prayers, King Abdullah was assassinated. The assassin was thought to have been hired by the family of al Husayni, the former Mufti of Jerusalem, to prevent Jordan making peace with Israel. In 1953 his 18-year-old grandson, the British educated Hussein,[7] was crowned king.

The Dome of the Rock suffered in the war, windows were blown out, mosaics smashed and the lead-covered Dome, last rebuilt in the eleventh century, was deemed unstable. Days after his coronation, King Hussein initiated a program for the restoration. However, this was only partially successful and in 1959 a new program was begun; the wooden rib structure of the outer dome and roof substructure of the octagon surrounding it were replaced, along with the wooden ceilings of the interior arcades. Gilding the Dome was achieved with a covering of gold colored anodized aluminum. Aided by Egyptian expertise the initial intent was to return the building to its most ancient form—richly tiled walls under a great golden dome—but this was set aside as the work progressed. The old tiles, some dating from the sixteenth century, were removed without record and replaced with an entirely new design created in a workshop in Turkey. No sooner had the work been completed than the new roof began to leak, threatening damage to the interior mosaics. There had been insufficient allowance for expansion and contraction of the aluminum covering. All was roughly corrected and the work was completed in 1964.[8]

During the 19 years of Jordanian rule all the major Christian and Muslim religious structures damaged in the war were restored. Conversely, all but one of the ancient synagogues in the Old City were destroyed, and Jews were banned.

An Naksah, The Six Day War

In Arabic it is *an Naksah* (The Setback), Israelis named it “The Six Day War,” with a conscious echo of the six days it took for the creation of the world. It is also now known as the 1967 Arab–Israeli War, the Third Arab–Israeli War, or the June War.[9] It was a war between Israel and the combined forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Early in 1967, in response to persistent Syrian shelling of Israel from the Golan Heights, Israel shot down six Syrian fighter planes. This gave Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser the pretext to move troops into the Sinai Peninsula and toward Israel's southern border. With this action he dismissed from the area the United Nations force that had been positioned to act as buffer between Egypt and Israel. He also began a blockade of the Israeli port of Eilat, which was clearly and an act of war under international law.

On May 25, encouraged by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia moved their troops to Israel's borders. Two days later, on May 27, President Nasser of Egypt declared, “Our basic goal is the destruction of Israel. The Arab people want to fight… The mining of Sharm El Sheik is a confrontation with Israel.” [10]Syria's Defense Minister Hafez Assad (later to be Syria's President) publicly declared:

> Our forces are now entirely ready not only to repulse any aggression, but to initiate the act ourselves, and to explode the Zionist presence in the Arab homeland of Palestine. The Syrian army, with its finger on the trigger, is united. I believe that the time has come to begin a battle of annihilation.[11]

The Country Studies/Area Handbook Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Army, produced a blow-by-blow account of the ensuing action:

> On June 5, Israel launched a preemptive attack against Egyptian forces deployed in Sinai…. Egypt denying Egyptian losses and claiming a massive and successful Egyptian attack against Israel. Emboldened by this information, Jordan launched immediate multiple attacks on Israel: The Egyptian field marshal in overall command of Arab forces ordered Jordanian artillery to open fire on Israeli positions, and Jordan's small air force conducted a bombing raid in the Tel Aviv area. Within hours, however, Israeli warplanes had effectively eliminated the Arab air forces

on the ground. After only two days of combat, Jordan's main armored unit had been defeated.

On June 7, Israeli forces seized the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem, and on June 27 the Israeli Parliament (Knesset) formally annexed the Old City of Jerusalem, an act that the United States and many other nations refused to recognize.[12]

Liberation of Temple Mount

A live Broadcast on Voice of Israel Radio, June 7, 1967, vividly recorded the scene and the mood as Temple Mount was taken:

Colonel Motta Gur [on loudspeaker]: *All company commanders, we're sitting right now on the ridge and we're seeing the Old City. Shortly we're going to go in to the Old City of Jerusalem that all generations have dreamed about. We will be the first to enter the Old City. Eitan's tanks will advance on the left and will enter the Lion's Gate. The final rendezvous will be on the open square above.*

[Sound of applause by the soldiers.]

Yossi Ronen: *We are now walking on one of the main streets of Jerusalem towards the Old City. The head of the force is about to enter the Old City.*

[Gunfire.]

Yossi Ronen: *There is still shooting from all directions; we're advancing towards the entrance of the Old City.*

[Sound of gunfire and soldiers' footsteps.]

[Yelling of commands to soldiers.]

[More soldiers' footsteps.]

[Gunfire.]

I'm with the first unit to break through into the Old City. There is a Jordanian bus next to me, totally burnt; it is very hot here. We're about to enter the Old City itself. We're standing below the Lion's Gate, the Gate is about to come crashing down, probably because of the previous

shelling. Soldiers are taking cover next to the palm trees; I'm also staying close to one of the trees. We're getting further and further into the City.

[Gunfire.]

Colonel Motta Gur announces on the army wireless: *The Temple Mount is in our hands! I repeat, the Temple Mount is in our hands!*

All forces, stop firing! This is the David Operations Room. All forces, stop firing! I repeat, all forces, stop firing! Over.

Commander eight-nine here, is this Motta (Gur) talking? Over.

[Inaudible response on the army wireless by Motta Gur.]

Uzi Narkiss: *Motta, there isn't anybody like you. You're next to the Mosque of Omar*.

Yossi Ronen: *I'm driving fast through the Lion's Gate all the way inside the Old City*.

Command on the army wireless: Search the area, make sure to enter every single house, but do not touch anything. Especially in holy places.

[Lt. Col. Uzi Eilam blows the Shofar. Soldiers are singing 'Jerusalem of Gold'.]

Uzi Narkiss: *Tell me, where is the Western Wall? How do we get there?*

Yossi Ronen: *I'm walking right now down the steps towards the Western Wall. I'm not a religious man, I never have been, but this is the Western Wall and I'm touching the stones of the Western Wall*.

Soldiers: [reciting the 'Shehechianu' blessing]: *Baruch ata Hashem, elokeinu melech haolam, she-hechianu ve-kiemanu ve-hegianu la-zman ha-zeh*. [Translation: Blessed art Thou Lord God King of the Universe who has sustained us and kept us and has brought us to this day]

Rabbi Shlomo Goren*: Baruch ata Hashem, menachem tsion u-voneh Yerushalayim*. [Translation: Blessed are thou, who comforts Zion and builds Jerusalem]

Soldiers: *Amen!*

Soldiers sing Hatikva next to the Western Wall. Goren (later to become Chief Rabbi of Israel) then blew the Shofar.[13]

It was General Narkiss, with Ronen, who had commanded the last Israeli Defense Force position in the Old City in 1948 and it was Narkiss with seven brigades under his command who was to take the Old City of Jerusalem for Israel.[14] It was Narkiss who appeared with Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin striding though the old city immediately after the capture.

In an interview he gave to the *Haaretz* newspaper (Israel's daily paper) in May of 1997 he recalled a heated exchange with Rabbi Goren in the hours after their entry on to Temple Mount. He stipulated nothing of this be published until after his death:

> "The paratroopers wandered around the plaza as if in a dream," Narkiss was quoted as saying. "Rabbi Shlomo Goren was among them. I was alone for a moment, lost in thought, when Rabbi Goren approached me." "Uzi," Rabbi Goren said to me, "Now is the time to put 100 kilograms of explosives into the Mosque of Omar so that we may rid ourselves of it once and for all." I said to him, "Rabbi, enough." He said, "Uzi, you will go down in history if you do this." I answered, "My name will already be written in the history books of Jerusalem." But Goren persisted. "You don't grasp what tremendous significance this would have. This is an opportunity that can be taken advantage of now, at this moment. Tomorrow it will be too late."
>
> I said "Rabbi, if you don't stop, I'll take you to jail."[15]

The events of that day have been much debated and analyzed, and there were those who viewed the capture of the Old City as a product more of ambition than military necessity, however the opportunity must have made the action irresistible.[16]

Defense Minister Dayan made the following statement at the Western Wall on June 7, 1967:

> This morning, the Israel Defense Forces liberated Jerusalem. We have united Jerusalem, the divided capital of Israel. We have returned to the holiest of our Holy Places, never to part from it again.
>
> To our Arab neighbors we extend, also at this hour—and with added emphasis at this hour—our hand in peace. And to our Christian and Muslim fellow citizens, we solemnly promise full religious freedom and

> rights. We did not come to Jerusalem for the sake of other peoples' Holy Places, and not to interfere with the adherents of other faiths, but in order to safeguard its entirety, and to live there together with others, in unity.[17]

In accordance with this statement 1967 onward, the Muslim Waqf Administration became responsible for al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock and all other mosques within Jerusalem. These sentiments it must be noted, were in marked contrast to the destruction of the synagogues in the wake of Jordan possession of the city in 1948.

On August 15, 1967, Rabbi Aluf Goren, the Chief Chaplain to the Israeli Armed Forces, held a service in observance of *Tisha B'av* within Haram al-Sharif. He claimed that the “Rock” of the Dome Mosque was not the foundation stone of the Temple, and it was not, therefore, against the principles of the Jewish faith to pray on it.[18] He discussed holding more services with the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs and claimed, despite Muslim protest, to have received the consent of the Muslim authorities. In response, on August 21 the Chief Rabbinate put up a notice at the Maghrebi Gate to the Haram (the only gate open to non Muslims) warning that Jews were forbidden by their religious laws to enter. In the view of the rabbinate Solomon's Temple may indeed have rested close to the Dome of the Rock.

After the Six Day War Israel clearly had achieved de facto *control over all of Jerusalem. Within Israeli jurisdiction, Jerusalem became the* de jure*—legal—capital of the State of Israel. However the majority of UN member states and most international organizations did not and have not accepted Jerusalem as Israel's capital, nor Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem. Palestinians continue to claim the city as Al Quds, the Holy, the capital of a future Palestinian state, and many United Nations General Assembly members,including most Arab states, support the Palestinian view.*

Presenting a balanced objective view in all that follows is difficult. Israel was attacked, was victorious and in victory was much more conciliatory than Jordan in 1948. It may be that in any discussion of the future of East Jerusalem and Temple Mount, Israel will seem the aggressor, yet there is no denying the profound religious and historical issues that tie this place to the foundation of both a culture and a religion. On both sides it is a zealous fringe that has forced confrontation and conflict. In suicide bombing on its cities and in rocket attacks on its borders, Israel has suffered continual

aggression from many Islamist groups who wish to destroy the nation.

Archeology and the Western Wall

The Moroccan Quarter of the Old City lay just a narrow passage away from a section of the Temple Mount wall that had been sacred to Jews for a millennium. Jews called it the Wailing Wall or the *Kotel*, and would gather against it, pressing into this narrow lane. On June 11, 1967, without warning, Israeli officials removed everyone in the quarter from their homes. This was quickly followed by bulldozers demolishing all the structures in the in the area west of the Kotel: 135 houses were destroyed and 650 people were displaced (though eventually rehoused elsewhere in the city). The land was cleared and excavated, revealing two more courses of Herod's Temple Mount wall. By the following March all had been paved, creating a vast plaza that would transform the Western Wall into a national shrine.

In early January 1968 Israeli authorities issued a license for a major archeological project at the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount, just south of the Kotel. The project was restricted to the very edge of Herod's wall by the agreement that all the material within the Haram both above and below ground, was under the control of the Muslim Waqf. This was the first-ever Jewish-led exploration of the Temple area, and even the most sober archeologist must have thrilled at the possibility of finding traces of Solomon's work. All was under the direction of Benyamin Mazar, Professor of Archeology at the Hebrew University. His team included five archeologists, 35 laborers, six foreign volunteers, and 40 members of Israel's national youth organization, *Gadna*.

Mazar's work would clear all the debris that had resulted from the Roman destruction of the Herod's Stoa, down to paved streets. It revealed paving stones split by the Roman destruction and the marks of the fires on the walls that had preceded the ruination. As he moved north along the wall Mazar uncovered the lower flight of steps which would have led to “Robinson's Arch” the bridge that had connected the city to the western entry to Herod's Stoa. The southernmost of what Charles Warren had deduced were a series of bridges connecting the city to the Temple. [19]

He wrote of his most thrilling recovery: “we found among the rubble from the destruction of the Second Temple a large stone hewn in an unusual shape, with a niche set into it; near this niche appears an inscription which reads: “To the place of the trumpeting.” This stone was most certainly the top corner stone of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount…the point where the priest would blow a trumpet to usher in the Sabbath.”[20]

The project caused continual anxiety in the Arab community. The Higher Muslim Committee protested in July of 1968 when the archeologists were using a bulldozer to excavate material immediately below al-Aqsa Mosque. However the extensive excavations across this broad area revealed evidence of the extensive palace structures of Omayyad Caliphate, dating from Caliph al-Walid, (707–715) a decade after the construction of the Dome of the Rock. Uncovered were a series of rectangular buildings elegantly organized around courtyards. There was also sufficient physical evidence to determine that these were at least two stories in height and were on a level with and presumably bridged to the Haram and al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Burning of Al-Aqsa Mosque

On August 13, 1969 Dennis Michael William Rohan, an Australian, was escorted from the Haram after acting suspiciously in front of the doors of al-Aqsa Mosque. On August 20 he asked one of the Muslim guards at the Maghrebi Gate if he could be allowed to enter the mosque the next morning before the official opening time. This he said, would allow him to take photographs without interruption; he may have offered money. Early on the morning of the 21st he bought a ticket and almost alone entered the mosque, bag in hand. In the bag were two containers and a bottle filled with benzene and kerosene. He walked over a field of prayer rugs across the nave to the southeastern corner and stopped in front of the magnificent twelfth-century stepped pulpit, the *Minbar*. In walnut, ebony and ivory this most triumphant work of Islamic craftsmanship had been Saladin's major gift to the Haram after he expelled the Christians. Rohan poured the benzene and kerosene liberally over the intricate carving and on to the steps and on to any other surface near at hand that would burn and set all alight. He quickly left the Haram possibly signaling to the guard that his work was done.[21]

The fire spread quickly and soon the smoke could be seen across the city. People rushed to help quench the flames. The only fire engine in the Old City took a long time to get its hoses on to the platform and it was an hour or so before fire brigades from Bethlehem and beyond reached the scene. The fire was finally contained, but not before the roof of the eastern aisle of the mosque had collapsed and the precious Minbar had been totally destroyed.

Even though forces from both Jewish and Muslim brigades had fought the blaze for more than four hours the Muslim Council blamed Israel and claimed that the fire brigades were deliberately slow to respond. And the firefighters had tackled the blaze in the midst of passionate confusion amidst cries of “Allah Akbar” and “Down with Israel.” Israeli fire trucks were stoned and their hoses cut, as rumor spread through the crowd that the Israeli firemen were spraying gasoline on the fire. Riots broke across the Old City and hundreds rushed to the Haram to be met with and beaten back by Israeli soldiers. Police then blocked the entrances to the Haram.

The next day, on the evidence of the guards, Rohan was arrested. He was a Christian tourist and had been in Israel for several months working on a Kibbutz and learning Hebrew. Two years before in Australia he had read an editorial in the magazine *The Plain Truth* a product of the radio evangelist Herbert W. Armstrong's Church of God.[22] Armstrong's editorial had been published immediately after the Israeli capture of East Jerusalem, and he had felt compelled to prepare his followers for the consequences. He wrote:

> There will be a Jewish Temple built in Jerusalem, with animal sacrifices once again being offered, probably within about four-and-one-half years. It is going to take some time to build such a Temple. And I don't see how they have another month to spare….[23]

Rohan knew immediately that this was a call directly to him. He could be the “Lord's emissary.” He knew that he must destroy whatever it was that stood on the memory of Solomon's Temple. He told the Israeli police that he acted because he believed that Jesus would return to earth when the Jews in Jerusalem were able to rebuild the Temple.

In November of 1969 Aubrey Menen reported on the trial in a lengthy essay in the *New York Times Magazine*. It is a troubling piece that would not be acceptable today. Menen considers the possibility that God may have indeed summoned this man, this keeper of sheep like his biblical

predecessors. He ends with a wish to keep Rohan's cause alive:

> I wonder if through it all Rohan knew that the temple has been rebuilt. It is on a hill outside Jerusalem. Some devoted historians have constructed a model of the city as it was in the time of Herod. It is a big model where a man would be a quarter of an inch high. Dominating it is the Second Temple lovingly constructed of marble and bronze. There it all is, as it must have been in Rohan's dreams—the courtyards, the gate called beautiful, the Inner Sanctuary. Did he see himself standing in it saying, "Lord behold Thy good and faithful servant"? I think he did and I envy him that dream. May he keep it in his time of troubles.[24]

Rohan was tried found insane and deported from Israel. The Mosque was slowly restored. Recreating the Minbar took until the beginning of 2007. After 37 years of international cooperation spanning many continents and religions it was reconstructed with extraordinary accuracy and reassembled within the great hall of al-Aqsa Mosque.

From these days forward the Haram–Temple Mount would be the stage for increasingly violent confrontations.

Jewish Prayer on Temple Mount

In 1971[25] Jewish students attempted to enter Temple Mount to demonstrate against the Israeli decision to recognize Jordan as the custodian of the Haram.

Late in 1975 a group of young Israelis, members of the *Herut* party, defied a ban in force since 1967 and prayed and sang nationalist songs in front of al-Aqsa Mosque. The Herut (Hebrew for "Freedom") had been the major right-wing political party in Israel since the 1940s. They were attacked and some stones were thrown by protesting Arabs: eight of the Israelis were arrested and charged with a breach of the peace. The magistrate who heard the case dismissed them and expressed surprise that neither the stone-throwers nor the police, who had prevented the group from exercising their inherited rights, had been arrested. He then ruled that Israeli authorities could not prevent Jews from praying anywhere in Jerusalem. This decision caused two weeks of violent protest culminating in rock-throwing confrontations with police after Friday prayers.

This decision appeared to defy not only Israeli law, but also rabbinical law. The sign placed by the Chief Rabbinate still stood at the Maghrebi Gate instructing Jews not to enter. The ruling was appealed to the State's attorney and while this was pending police acted to prevent any similar provocations.[26] However early in March of 1976 another group managed to enter and began singing and praying only to be removed by the police. On March19, in advance of what was expected to be a major Muslim demonstration protesting the right of Jews to pray on Temple Mount, Israel sent a large number of troops into the Old City, closing the roads to the Jordanian West Bank. After prayer at the al-Aqsa Mosque a Muslim judge urged the crowds to disperse in the knowledge that their continual presence on the Haram was explicit evidence that it was and would remain Muslim. On March 21st the magistrate's ruling was reversed.

Such violence was a manifestation of a more profound problem. In that same March, Naomi Shepherd wrote in the *New York Times:*

> Jewish–Arab co-existence depends not on any formal agreement but on a complex network of necessary ambiguity and tacit compromise. The Jerusalem Arabs who remain Jordanian citizens have no established representative body of their own… There is no formal contact between the [Israeli] Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Supreme Muslim Council, which administers the Temple Mount in accordance with the decision taken by Defense Minister Moshe Dayan after the 1967 war…[27]

In May of 1980 the American born Rabbi Meir Kahane and an associate were arrested and jailed under emergency regulations primarily aimed at holding Arab terrorists without trial. It was subsequently made public that Kahane and his associated had been engaged in a plot to blow up al-Aqsa Mosque.[28] Orthodox Rabbi Kahane founded and led the New York based Jewish Defense League and in Israel created the political *Kach* movement. After his arrest he stood unsuccessfully for the Knesset before being sentenced to six months imprisonment for his terrorist activity. After leaving prison he was elected and entered the Knesset above the objections from the central elections committee “because of his racism.” The Israeli Supreme court claimed it had no legal power to block him taking his seat.

In speech after speech he preached the same message:

> It was the unforgettable, majestic, glorious day in June 1967, as Jewish soldiers crashed through the walls of Jerusalem's old city. Redeeming, reclaiming, liberating the ancient streets and alleyways; racing towards the Wall, scaling it and then the electrifying words of the Commander, Motta Gur: “The Temple is in our hands! The Temple Mount is in our hands!”
>
> The very moment of glorious Jewish victory in 1967 was the beginning of a flight to shame. Not enough that the Israeli government of 1967 committed the worst of mistakes by not driving out the Arabs who tried to wipe her out. The fearful and timid leaders of Israel immediately approached the heads of the Muslim community to assure them that the Temple Mount—the holiest of holiest of Jewish places—would remain in their hands. Jews were forbidden to enter there to pray, on their holiest site, a site stolen from them by invading Muslims who desecrated Judaism by building two mosques there…. He who controls the Temple Mount controls Jerusalem. And he who controls Jerusalem controls the Holy Land.[29]

The Kach movement called for the removal of all Muslim buildings and activity from Temple Mount and for the construction of a synagogue, to be built well clear of the possible latent presence of Solomon's Temple.

Despite condemnation by the United Nations, in August 1980 the Israeli parliament affirmed that Jerusalem was a united city and capital of Israel. This united city included the annexation of East Jerusalem—the Old Arab City. And Jews continued to find ways of praying secretly among the throngs of worshipers who entered Temple Mount daily. Their prayer books concealed, their *yarmulkes* hidden under baseball caps. Sometimes this was discovered and provoked angry reaction from the Muslim faithful. At end of Yom Kippur in the fall of 1981, two men rushed through the gates and blew the Shofar, the rams' horns, to mark *Rosh-ha-Shanah*. They were manhandled out of the gate, but expressed deep satisfaction in being the first to sound the Shofar within Solomon's sanctuary for almost 2000 years. (A similar claim had been made in 1929.) While some prayed on Temple Mount others were probing beneath the ground along the western edge.

The Rabbi's Tunnel

Officially known as the Western Wall Tunnel, the tunnel was a project of the Religious Affairs Ministry, which had been formed immediately after the Six Day War. Its objective was to excavate a passage along the full length of the Western Wall down to the level of the city when the Temple was destroyed. It was a search for a Jewish past, and presumably a search for some evidence of the existence of Solomon's Temple, and in the imagination of a few it could reveal a path to the lost Ark.

Responsibility for the work was given to archeologist Meir Ben-Dov, who had been Benjamin Mazar's assistant in the very public project across the whole South Wall of the Mount. He was far from neutral in his archeology. He had earned both praise and censure when he had surreptitiously opened and penetrated 30 and 90 feet into two ancient passages beneath al-Aqsa Mosque (behind the Herod's Hulda Gates). When discovered, Dov withdrew, after protest from the Waqf, the tunnels were sealed and remain so to the present. Warren had previously opened passages in the same area. as he clearly shows in his plan.[30]

Muslim authorities strongly opposed the tunnel project. The excavation would destroy the material of their history, it would endanger structures in which people were living and above all it was seen as yet more evidence of Israel's desire to posses the Haram. The floor of the tunnel was set at a level 30 and more feet above the bedrock and followed the master course supporting the outer walls of Herod's structure. It was begun by clearing debris from beneath a large arch just north of the Western Wall plaza; this was a Mamluk structure from the fourteenth century, and had supported a street almost at the level of the Haram. It was then dug through structures and rubble that had accumulated over centuries along the base of the Wall, through Arab and Crusader foundations; uncovering in its path fragments of the narrow streets of the Roman city; in the process it uncovered one stone 41 feet in length 15 feet wide, with an estimated weight of 370 tons.

Warren's excavations provided the clearest guidance to the archeologists. He had opened and explored two tunnels along the west wall. One, appropriately named Warren's Gate, had led into a tunnel and stair to the Temple platform. There was evidence that this tunnel had been the site of a

small synagogue before the Crusades. But for those who knew the Temple from Josephus' description, it could also have been the private entrance of the rabbis to the Temple. Ben-Dov's tunnel crossed the face of Warren's Gate. After the new tunnel was complete Rabbi Yehuda Meir Getz would pray before the Warren's Gate believing he was close to the space where once had stood Solomon's Holy of Holies. In July 1981 he entered the tunnel with some laborers who began, under his instruction, to knock down the wall sealing the gate. The hammering was heard in the cisterns below the Haram, and when Muslim guards found the source they confronted Getz and his helpers. It took police intervention to end the conflict. The gate was resealed, and so it remains.

On April 7, 1982 a false explosive device along with a letter bearing the name of Rabbi Kahane (among others) was found at the entrance to al-Aqsa Mosque. The letter threatened Muslim and Christian religious leaders.

On April 11 an Israeli soldier opened fire on worshipers in and around the Dome of the Rock. He was an American, Alan Harry Goodman 37 who had arrived in Israel from Baltimore in 1977. At 9:30 on Easter Sunday, Goodman had come through the Maghrebi Gate carrying a sleeping bag, a bag over his shoulders and an M-16 machine gun under his arm. There were tourists about. The Muslim guards within Gate cried, “forbidden” and tried to stop him. He shot one and hit the other with the butt of the gun, then moved quickly to the center of Haram. A guard tried to stop him and was shot dead. Then he turned the machine gun on the doors and marble walls of the Dome, entering the sanctuary and firing randomly on those in prayer. Arab reports claim that he killed nine people and injured 40, Israeli radio agreed on the number of injured. Subsequently, it emerged that there were only two deaths, although 30 of the wounded were in critical condition.

The sound of gunfire brought Israeli police, then ambulances, to the Western Wall, but before they entered the Haram they cleared all the Jewish worshipers from the plaza below. Police and Troops surrounded the Dome then rushed in among the wounded, to find Goodman cowering in the cave at the heart of the shrine. He was reported as saying, “I had to do it. They are killing my friends and relatives. I am taking revenge.” He was taken out of the Dome by the police under a gauntlet of sticks and fists, and riot troops firing over the heads of the crowd. After several hours of angry

demonstrations, Israeli forces withdrew, but returned when stones were thrown at the police. Teargas and rubber bullets drove the crowd from the Dome to al-Aqsa and out of the Haram.

The attack caused rioting throughout Jerusalem and the West Bank, resulting in more than 100 injured, and a general strike was called. In the Arab mind, despite all evidence to the contrary, the act was believed in some way have had official sanction. In a statement to the United Nations Security Council on April 13 the Ambassador of Jordan described the attack: “On Sunday, 11th April, at 9:20 a.m., a gang of armed Israeli troops directed heavy fire from various directions at al-Aqsa Mosque… That Israeli carnage was carried out to give cover to an Israeli soldier, or is he an American?” Goodman had been inducted into the army only the previous month. Many Israelis were equally distressed by such incendiary behavior by a foreigner; behavior which could give rise to such dangerous misunderstanding.

Fliers from Kahane's Kach movement were found in Goodman's apartment. Though the Kach denied any connection with what they called a “sick person,” they agreed provide Goodman with a lawyer because, in Kahane's words, preventing Jews from praying on Temple Mount was “driving some Jews to acts of desperation.” Goodman agreed to be thus represented; he was charged with one count of murder and five counts of attempted murder. The Israeli court sentenced him to life imprisonment plus forty years.

On July 25, 1982 a follower of Kahane[31] was sentenced to two and a half years in prison for planning to blow up the Dome of the Rock. On July 28 armed yeshiva students acting under the direction of an aide to Defense Minister Ariel Sharon occupied three Palestinian apartments near the Haram; it emerged that this was the first stage of a plan to conduct covert excavations under Temple Mount. On March 10, 1983 armed members of the political movement *Gush Emunim*, (Block [of the] Faithful), who believed that Judea was theirs by divine right, attempted to take the Haram by force. Other reports identified the attackers as followers of Kahane. Twenty-nine were charged and later acquitted.

Throughout this period, despite the intermittent violence, an international team of conservators was working to restore the structure of the small dome and the mosaics and painting destroyed in the burning of al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969. Work on the interior concluded in 1983 after four years of toil,

resulting in the most complete renewal the of decorative surfaces since their installation in the fourteenth century—the effect is intense and beautiful.[32] Such thoughtful and gentle activity had no effect on the conflict.

Continual Provocation

To the extreme discomfort of the majority of Christians and Jews, particularly Israelis, the last decades of the twentieth century nourished fanatical groups claiming divine guidance in their propositions about the future. One such is the Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement, whose web site states that “The goal of the Temple Mount Faithful is the building of the Third Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem in our lifetime in accordance with the Word of G-d and all the Hebrew prophets, and the liberation of the Temple Mount from Arab (Islamic) occupation so that it may be consecrated to the Name of G-d.” In May the Israeli High Court allowed the “Temple Mount Faithful” movement to hold prayers at the Maghrebi Gate. September 17, 1983 despite police objections, the aforementioned Chief Rabbi Goren, formerly Rabbi of the Israeli Army and Chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazim, held prayers in a space beneath Haram al-Sharif.

In January 27, 1984, shortly before Friday prayer on the Haram, two men scaled the Eastern Wall, the wall facing the Mount of Olives. They were spotted as they clambered on to the platform and a Muslim guard raised the alarm. They fled, leaving behind, according to Israeli reports, 22 pounds of explosives and 18 Israeli Army issue grenades. Some said they were in Israeli army uniforms. The Muslim authorities reported that several individuals had entered the Haram and that many more were at the foot of the wall. Subsequently, six bags and many bombs were found on the Haram and more bags of explosives at the foot of the wall. The Israeli Government withheld information about the incident for 36 hours. The Supreme Muslim Council warned, “If the attempted explosions had succeeded, all Arab countries would have immediately launched a holy war against Israel.” In March, seven were arrested, all linked to Meir Kahane: four were American. A total of 27 were subsequently arrested. Twenty–five civilians and two army officers were charged with belonging to a terrorist organization, murder, attempted murder and plotting to blow up al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

They were linked to a group, named in Hebrew letters TNT, standing for "Terror against Terror," which included members of the respected religious settlement movement and veterans of the elite units of the Israeli armed forces. The leader of the plot to bomb the Haram was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Three were convicted of murder, and twelve for various other violent crimes against Arabs

In January 1986, days after a group was stopped from hoisting an Israeli flag on Temple Mount, the Haram was visited by the Interior Committee of the Israeli Parliament, on the pretext of ensuring there was no unauthorized construction being done. As they were passing al-Aqsa Mosque, members of the committee began to pray and had to be escorted out under police protection from the angry Muslim crowd. In February the President of Israel commuted the sentences of the two men who planned to destroy the Haram.

On August 5 a group of 60 or more prominent rabbis, at a meeting led by Shlomo Goren, issued a *halacha*, a religious edict, calling for a synagogue to be built on Temple Mount.[33] They said that a careful survey by the Israeli Army had determined the approximate areas of the Solomon's Temple and from this evidence they had conclude that a synagogue could be built at the southern edge of Temple Mount without disturbing sacred ground. Goren described in some detail, the form such a structure would take. The statement concluded by calling on the "the Jewish nation and the Israeli authorities to guard and implement Jewish sovereignty of the Temple Mount and prevent it being turned over to and desecrated by foreigners." In response, the head of the Muslim Supreme Council stated, "Muslims will never permit any Jew to pray on Haram al-Sharif or any council to establish a synagogue in the area."

The provocation was from both sides; on October 15 three hand grenades were thrown at Israeli soldiers and their relatives as they waited to board buses by the Western Wall. One person was killed and 65 were wounded. The soldiers were part of the *Givati* Brigade and had just taken part in a swearing-in ceremony after completing basic training.

The disquiet simmered throughout 1987, beginning in mid-January when more than 70 Palestinians were injured by tear gas and clubbing on the Haram.[34] It ended in December with clashes with police on the Haram–part of the widespread and violent demonstrations over what was viewed as Israeli oppression of Gaza. By 1988 the "Rabbi's Tunnel" had penetrated the full

length of the Western Wall and the authorities planned to construct an exit close to the Via Dolorosa so visitors would not have to retrace their steps. In August word spread though the Arab community that Jews were attempting to excavate under the Haram. Hundreds gathered to block the opening of a northern exit, and the plan was abandoned.

In November Israeli Prime Minister Yitsak Shamir met with far-right parties, including Herut, to negotiate the form of a coalition with his Likud party. The oldest and the most influential of these, *Tehiya*, was explicit in its demands—The Temple Mount should be returned to Jewish sovereignty. The Muslim holy sites including the Dome of the Rock would remain, but Jews would be allowed to build a prayer site on the Mount.[35] Shamir's public response was, “these parties aren't going to get everything they want.”

In December of 1988, in the Jabalia refugee camp north of Gaza City, a major stronghold of the newly formed Hamas movement, the first *Intifada*, the “war of stones,” was declared against the Israeli military occupation of Gaza. Hamas called for the destruction of the State of Israel and its replacement with a Palestinian Islamic state. Intifada spread to the West Bank and finally to the Old City of Jerusalem. It mostly involved confrontations between stone-throwing Palestinian youths and the highly professional Israeli Defense Force.[36]

In the first week of April of 1989, after noon prayers marking the start of Ramadan, an Israeli flag was ripped up in front of al-Aqsa Mosque; stones were then thrown at the Jews worshiping at the Western Wall below. It took police almost an hour to control the ensuing riot. On the following two Fridays the Israeli police prohibited all Palestinian residents of the occupied territories—the West Bank and Gaza–from attending prayers at al-Aqsa. And to prevent a recurrence of the rioting, roadblocks were set up on all routes into Jerusalem. It was the first time that Israeli had placed any restrictions on freedom of worship. Teddy Kollek, then mayor of Jerusalem, wrote in reaction to the front-page article in the *New York Times* titled “For the First Time Israel Restricts Palestinians' Freedom of Worship”:

> Another of our consistently held principles is to prevent the Temple Mount from being used for political demonstrations for those who would abuse the sanctity of a holy place or holy season, To that end we deny the demand of Jewish political groups like the Faithful of the Temple Mount

> to pray at what is, after all, Judaism's holiest site because we know their intention is political not religious. Similarly we denied Christian fundamentalists the right to hold a prayer meeting on the Temple Mount. He added this was not the first time the police had restricted attendance.[37]

On October 8, 1990 the Supreme Muslim Council had summoned the faithful to the Haram to defend it against the actions of the "Temple Mount Faithful," who had announced their intention to lay the cornerstone of a synagogue (to the plans of Rabbi Goren), close to al-Aqsa Mosque. Although the Israeli authorities had denied their request, and no one from the group appeared, mosques throughout the Old City urged all to come and defend Islam. In the Palestinian view the confrontation was triggered when the police on the Haram attacked the demonstrators chanting anti-Jewish slogans. This provoked the crowd, which turned on the police, driving them out of the precinct and then rushed to top of the Western Wall and began to rain missiles on the 20,000 and more gathered below for *Birkat-ha Cohenim* (a day of special blessing during *Sukkoth*). Stones and bottles, anything they could get their hands on, were hurled on to the plaza in front of the Wall.

The police quickly cleared the worshipers from the area below then reentered the Haram in aggressive formation firing randomly at a crowd in panic. Many were shot in the back, while some fled into al-Aqsa Mosque, where they were pursued and shot, bullets scarring the walls. Reports suggest that the attacks were indiscriminate, killing and injuring old and young, including doctors tending the wounded.[38] By some reports 21 Arabs were killed and more than 100 were seriously injured. Among the thousands worshiping at the Western Wall below there were few injuries.

News of Palestinian suffering led to further bloody confrontations with Israeli police and with troops throughout the occupied territories.[39] The Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir, called the Muslim anger hysterical, "fundamental extremism emanating from Baghdad [started this] fire in Jerusalem." The first official enquiry described the event as "a terrible criminal act by the masses whipped up by the preachers using the loudspeakers." It laid the blame on the Palestinians, stating " the use of force on Temple Mount under the prevailing conditions was found to be justified because the police officers 'were afraid for their lives.'" However, a second enquiry carried out several months later as required by Israeli law, showed

the first official version of the events to have been deliberately misleading. There was no premeditation by the Palestinians, the evidence showed that the demonstrators had turned on the police when a tear gas grenade was accidentally dropped and rolled toward the crowd.

In December of 1990 the “Temple Mount Faithful” paraded Israeli flags through the streets of Old City to the gates the Haram, to celebrate Hanukkah despite being denied permission by the police, and Israel deported four respected Muslim leaders as instigators of violence.

Rabbi's Tunnel Revisited

In the fall of 1991 the “Temple Mount Faithful” brought suit against the Waqf for actions in their administration of the Haram. The suit also charged the Israeli Antiquities Authority for failing to enforce the laws governing archeological sites. The claim was that crucial evidence, which could help locate Solomon's Temple, had been covered over with dirt and stones. The archeologist Dan Bahat, who was district archeologist of the city during the excavations after 1967 agreed. The Waqf, he claimed, had allowed the destruction of important remains. The Muslim authorities ignored the hearing: Israel, in their view, still had had no sovereignty over the Noble Sanctuary.

In February of 1994, a Jewish settler dressed in Israeli army uniform opened fire at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, worshiped by both Jews and Muslims as the burial place of Abraham. Twenty died and more than sixty were injured. Again, there were violent confrontations across Palestine. In response, and for the first time, police barred access to the Western Wall for fear of a repeat of the events that led to the massacre in 1990.

In August of 1997 the Israeli Supreme Court lifted a ban on Jewish visits to Temple Mount during holy days, in force since 1990. There was immediate confrontation and the Haram was closed.

There were further confrontations in September of 1996 when the mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, agreed to open the northern exit from the “Rabbi's Tunnel.” This was one of many actions by Olmert's administration to gradually impose Israeli control over Palestinian neighborhoods, but it was

also the product of a deal. The Muslim authorities agreed to the tunnel in exchange for being allowed to create a mosque in the vast arcaded space (“Solomon's Stables”) below the southern platform of the Haram. It would become the Marwani Mosque. The terms of the deal had not been made public, and news of the tunnel opening led to rioting throughout Palestine. Five were killed in Ramallah in a warlike battle between the Palestinian police and the Israeli army. Many remained convinced that the tunnel would become the base for Jewish excavations beneath the Haram

In January 1997 Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made a gift of a silver relief map of the old city of Jerusalem to the Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Israel, it showed Temple Mount crowned by Solomon's Temple; all signs of Muslim presence were absent.

In October 1999 Israeli moved two groups of Christians, mainly Americans, living on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, fearing that they may have attempted to kill themselves or to destroy the shrines on the Haram under the influence of millennial prophecies. And in December, as construction work began to uncover two ancient arches within the southeast corner of the Haram, the “Temple Mount Faithful” marched through the old city burning Palestinian flags and vowing to destroy the Dome of the Rock.

Camp David Summit

In July of 2000, President Bill Clinton brought Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasar Arafat to Maryland to attempt to reach agreement on a lasting settlement of the Israel–Palestine conflict. Although the details of what was discussed have never been formally disclosed, Barak is believed to have been willing to discuss Palestinian control over East Jerusalem, including most of the Old City, even allowing it to become the capital of a Palestinian state and “Religious Sovereignty” over the Haram.[40] In return Arafat had to give Israeli sovereignty over those parts of the Western Wall religiously significant to Jews and to declare the “end of conflict” and agree to make no further claims on Israel. Arafat neither responded nor made a counter-offer. There was no trust and in the end he simply walked away. The summit failed. Such proposals were probably discussed but may never have given any formality,

and Israeli Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon would have vehemently opposed Barak's willingness to consider any concessions over the control of the Old City.

The Second Intifada

In its issue of September 22, 2000, the newspaper *Haaretz* carried a report that Israeli diplomats had proposed to French and Egyptian leaders the handing over of Temple Mount to an international body as the only way to resolve the competing claims between Judaism and Islam. On the same day there was a rumor that Barak and Arafat were planning to meet. The pressure was coming from Washington.[41] Six days later, on September 28, Ariel Sharon, leader of the Likud party, protected by a dense cordon of 1500 police, entered Temple Mount by the Maghrebi Gate, and for 34 minutes strolled between al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. He made no attempt to enter any of the shrines then turned back and left. Palestinians screamed in protest at what they saw as an act of extreme provocation, some stones were thrown and the police retaliated. There were a few injuries on both sides.

The visit was carefully planned; the Muslim authorities were consulted and approved the route Sharon would take. His declared purpose was to examine the archeological sites following work that had been carried out by the Muslim Waqf, in constructing the Marwani Mosque. He was later quoted as saying “I believe we can live together with the Palestinians… I came here to the holiest place of the Jewish people in order to see what happens here and really to have the feeling of how we move forward.” He said he had brought a message of peace. The next day, September 29, 2000, as people were leaving the mosque after Friday prayers, Israeli police, in full riot gear stormed on to the Haram; stones were thrown and the police opened fire. Four were killed and there were 200 injured, mainly Palestinians. This was followed by running street battles in the West Bank and Gaza and many more were killed.

Political observers saw the visit as a maneuver by Sharon to reaffirm his control over the Likud party in the face of competition from Netanyahu. Within weeks, Prime Minister Ehud Barak would face a vote of no

confidence in parliament, in large measure because of his continual efforts to broker a peace agreement with Arafat. President Clinton continued to seek a basis for an agreement until the last hours of his presidency. In the elections of 2001 the Likud came to power and Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister of Israel.

Sharon's armed entry on to the Haram was the pretext for Hamas to launch a second Intifada, the Al Aqsa Intifada. This was viewed by Israel as an excuse for a campaign of violence by the Palestinian Leadership in Ramallah. Beginning in June of 2001 extremists launched a wave of suicide bombings against Israeli civilians in retaliation for the Israeli killings of civilians.

On September 11, 2001 there was a massive terrorist attack on the United States. Two passenger airliners were deliberately crashed into the upper floors of the World Trade Center's twin towers. A third was crashed into the Pentagon and on the fourth the bravery of passengers prevented it from destroying either the Capitol or the White House.

On December 27, 2001, a bin Laden video stated, “Terrorism against America deserves to be praised because it was a response to injustice, aimed at forcing America to stop its support for Israel, which kills our people.”[42]

And into the present the conflict continues (Plates 31, 32).[43]

Notes

[1] Along with the orphan funds and the Islamic courts in Palestine.

[2] Sent to exile in 1939, the Mufti collaborated with the Germans during the war and helped recruit Muslims for the SS. He was an inspiration to Yasar Arafat.

[3] *Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August 1929*, Cmd. 3530 (“The Shaw Commission Report”), p. 151.

[4] The family were the traditional chiefs of the Hashemite branch of the Quraysh tribe.

[5] The Israeli forces were still the paramilitary Haganah; it would be days before the creation of the Israeli Defense Force.

[6] Progress Report of the U.N. Mediator on Palestine, September 16, 1948 (extracts). VII Protection of Holy Places… Part One: The Mediation Effort.

United Nations Information System (UNISPAL) Documents Section. (http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/AB14D4AAFC4E1BB9852562040(accessed April 9, 2012).

[7] Hussein had been at his grandfather's side when he was assassinated.

[8] Beatrice St. Laurent (1998), *The Dome of the Rock and the Politics of Restoration*. Bridgewater State College, Bridgewater Review (http://bridgew.us/Review/archives/1998/December/dome.htm, accessed April 9, 2012).

[9] All that follows is based on reports from the *Jerusalem Post*, *Haaretz*, and the *New York Times*.

[10] *Position of the Arab Forces—May 1967* Jewish Agency for Israel (www.jewishagency.org, accessed April 9, 2012).

[11] Mitchell Bard *The 1967 Six Day War*. (http://countrystudies.us/jordan/13.htm, accessed April 9, 2012). It continues "Of all the Arab belligerents, Jordan, which could least afford it, lost most in the war. Government figures listed over 6,000 troops killed or missing. During the short war, about 224,000 refugees—many of whom had first been refugees from the 1948–49 war–fled from the West Bank to the East Bank. One-third to one-half of the country's best agricultural land and its main tourist attractions were lost to Israel. On June 27, the Israeli parliament (Knesset) formally annexed the Old City of Jerusalem, an act that the United States and many other nations refused to recognize."

[12] The Country Studies/Area Handbook Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Army.

[13] Voice of Israel Radio, June 7th, 1967 (www.isracast.com/article.aspx?id = 374, accessed April 9, 2012).

[14] General Uzi Narkiss died December1997, and Rabbi Shlomo Goren died in 1994.

[15] Jerusalem (AP) by Hilary Appelman (December 31, 1997).

[16] One report claimed that Menachem Begin heard over the BBC that the UN was about to call for a cease-fire and urged the Prime Minister to quickly take the Old City. (Anshel Pfeffer, "The Battle for Jerusalem is in Our Hands." (http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/magazine/the-battle-for-jerusalem-is-in-our-hands-1.221961, accessed April 9, 2012).

[17] "Jerusalem and the Holy Places: Statement at the Western Wall by Defense Minister Dayan, 7 June 1967," Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Foreign+Relations/Israels+Foreign+Relations+1974/11+Statement+at+the+Western+Wall+by+Defence+Minist.htm, accessed April 9, 2009.)

[18] Motti Inbari, 2009, *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount*, "The Chief Rabbinate and the Temple Mount Issue," August 17, 1967, translation Shaul Vardi. Albany, NY: SUNY Press. Jewish law forbids stepping on the Haram until the Temple is rebuilt.

[19] The Israeli Ministerial Committee on the Holy Places showed particular interest in the vaulted chambers to the west of "Wilson's Arch," the second surviving fragment of a bridging structure to Temple Mount. This is presumed to be the structure mentioned in Josephus as having carried water via a conduit from Solomon's Pools.

[20] B. Mazar (1976), "The Archeological Excavations near Temple Mount," in Y. Yadin, ed., *Jerusalem Revealed: Archeology and the Holy City, 1968–1974*. New Haven, CT:Yale University Press.

[21] This is drawn from several web sources on Rohan.

[22] It was renamed the Worldwide Church of God in 1968.

[23] *The Plain Truth*, June 4, 1967

[24] Aubrey Menen, 1969, "The Trial of the New Moses," *New York Times*, November 23, 1969.

[25] March 10, 1971.

[26] *New York Times*, February 14, 1976.

[27] Naomi Shepherd, 1976, "Recent Incidents Are, as Usual, Both Political and Religious; The Storm in Jerusalem Revives a Dormant Issue,"*New York Times*, March 28, 1976.

[28] In June, in retaliation for the killing of six Jews by Palestinian terrorists in Hebron, Jewish terrorists attempted to assassinate the mayor of four Palestinian cities, two were severely injured.

[29] Rabbi Meir Kahane in 1989, from http://rabbikahane.wordpress.com/2010/08/25/is-the-temple-mount-in-our-hands/(accessed April 9, 2012).

[30] Abraham Rabinovitch, *Jerusalem Post*, September 27, 1996. templemount.org/tunnel.html (accessed April 9, 2012).

[31] Yoel Lerner.

[32] Isam Awwad Jerusalem with the International Center for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments (ICCROM) (1983), *Report on the Restoration of the al-Aqsa Mosque*.

[33] Motti Inbari, *Jewish Fundamentalism and the Temple Mount.*

[34] "Israel's Heavier Hand," *New York Times*, January 17, 1988.

[35] Joel Brinkley, *New York Times*, November 4, 1988.

[36] The conflict would last until 1993 and result in the deaths of 160 Israelis and 1100 Palestinians. A further thousand Palestinians were believed to have been executed for collaboration with Israel.

[37] Sabra Chartrand. From the *New York Times*, April 15 ©1989, The New York Times. All rights reserved. Used by permission and protected by the Copyright Laws of the United States. The printing, copying, redistribution, or retransmission of this content without express written permission is prohibited.

[38] It was reported that tear gas grenade was fired into a hospital where the injured were being treated, causing injury to women and children. The Israeli commander said that the grenade had been fired accidentally and apologized.

[39] The death toll was the highest since the start of the 34-month *Intifada*, and the deadliest in Jerusalem. Up till that month the uprising had led to the deaths of 793 Palestinians and 51 Israelis.

[40] palestinefacts.org/pf_1991to_now_campdavid_2000.php (accessed April 9, 2012).

[41] At Camp David the Americans had proposed split sovereignty, the Muslims controlling the surface, the Jews everything beneath.

[42] Transcript: Bin Laden video excerpts BBC News December 27, 2001. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/1729882.stm, accessed April 9, 2012).

[43] It is estimated that between 2000 and 2008 over 4300 Palestinians and over 1000 Israelis, both military and civilian, were killed.

Though the security and survival of Israel was a central aspect of US policy and military action in the Middle East, President George W. Bush did not visit Israel until the last year of his administration. He had separate talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. In the official transcript from his news conference at the King David Hotel on January 10, 2008 he stated:

> The point of departure for permanent status negotiations to realize this vision seems clear. There should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967. The agreement must establish a Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people.
>
> Security is fundamental. No agreement and no Palestinian state will be born of terror. I reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to Israel's security.
>
> The establishment of the state of Palestine is long overdue. The Palestinian people deserve it. And it will enhance the stability of the region, and it will contribute to the security of the people of Israel.
>
> The peace agreement should happen and can happen by the end of this year. I know each leader shares that important goal.
>
> And I am committed to doing all I can to achieve it.

Epilogue

In the present Temple Mount, the Noble Sanctuary lies at the very heart of the most intractable conflict, a conflict in politics and religion whose roots are as ancient as the Temple itself. Consider the near future as willed by the zealous desires of the three religions.

Beginning with Islam: surprisingly, Christ's “second coming” is dealt with more explicitly in the Qur'an than in the Christian texts. It is always addressed in relation to Islam's prophecies for Judgment Day. Throughout the Qur'an there is repeated concern with the need to prepare for the Day of Judgment—the *Qiyamah*–also known as the Resurrection, the Day of Gathering, and the Great Announcement. A very cryptic note in the Qur'an 43:61 reads: “And (Jesus) shall be a Sign (for the coming of) the Hour (of Judgment): therefore have no doubt about the (Hour), but follow ye Me: this is a Straight Way.” This is further explained in the Hadith from the collection of Adu Dawud (817–888) narrated by Abu Hurayrah:

> The Prophet said: There is no prophet between me and him, that is, Jesus. He will descend (to the earth). When you see him, recognize him: a man of medium height, reddish hair, wearing two light yellow garments, looking as if drops were falling down from his head though it will not be wet. He will fight for the cause of Islam. He will break the cross, kill the swine, and put an end to war; God will perish all religions except Islam. He will destroy the Antichrist and will live on the earth for forty years and then he will die. The Muslims will pray behind him.

In certain commentaries Jerusalem is the setting for the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an described two blasts of a trumpet that will sound on the Day of Judgment. On the first “all those that are in the heavens and all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah please; then it shall be blown again, then lo! they shall stand up awaiting.” In the Hadith it is said that the archangel who will blow the trumpet from a holy rock in Jerusalem and elsewhere it s prophesied that:

> the trumpet shall be blown, so all those that are in the heavens and all those that are in the earth shall swoon, except such as Allah please; then

> it shall be blown again, then lo! they shall stand up awaiting. And the earth shall beam with the light of its Lord, and the Book shall be laid down, and the prophets and the witnesses shall be brought up, and judgment shall be given between them with justice, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.[1]

Elsewhere in the Qur'an it is written “And We said to the Israelites after him: Dwell in the land: and when the promise of the next life shall come to pass, we will bring you both together in judgment.” Which passage has been interpreted as linking the end of time with Jerusalem and the Haram.[2]

The Dome is not only the oldest monument to Islam, the third most sacred place, constructed a bare sixty years after the death of Muhammad, but also in the minds of the faithful it is the destination of the prophet's “night journey.” It is the spot from which he rises among to meet with God. In its every stone and tile it embodies the grandeur and mystery of Islam. Like the Temple of Solomon it will always be present in the minds of the believers.

The great majority of Christians—Protestants, Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox—have no concern with rebuilding the Temple; it plays no role in their faith or ritual. They view the presence of Christ as the “New Temple.” His crucifixion the ultimate sacrifice, recalled in the Eucharist:

> Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.[3]

And from Paul came the very clear and satisfying idea that the Holy Spirit dwelt within all:

> What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you and which ye have from God, and that ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.[4]

Nowhere in the New Testament is there any instruction to Christians to rebuild; no indication that any such act would be necessary to prepare for the Christ's return. His most prophetic, and for some perplexing, statement came immediate after he predicted, “…there shall not be left here one stone upon

another, that shall not be thrown down." As he and the disciples were leaving the Temple they asked, "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ."[5] Then he describes an age of tribulation with the sun and moon in darkness and the stars falling and the heavens shaken:

> And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.[6]

Christ acknowledges this as an echo of the prophecy on the coming of the "Son of man" in the book of Daniel "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days and they brought him near before him."[7] And in choosing it Christ dons the mantle of Daniel's Messiah predicted five centuries earlier; no mention of Jerusalem or the Temple. In a curious coda the book of Acts does foresee Christ's second coming being in Jerusalem. The disciples were watching Christ ascend to heaven from the Mount of Olives two strangers, heavenly messengers, appeared and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken away from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go to heaven."[8]

What is disturbing, however, is the fervor among some fundamentalist Protestants who demand the Temple be rebuilt to pave way for the "second coming." Their most extreme views come from such as the "premillennialists," so called because of their obedience to the literal text from Revelation:[9] "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him thousand years." The premillennialists are only one of many sub groups united by the absolute belief in the literal truth of biblical texts, which they, in the various ways continually searching for revelations. Many offer strong support to the State of Israel, even observing Jewish holidays and some religious rituals, and the most extreme among them share the views of Orthodox Jews: to rebuild Solomon's Temple the Dome of the Rock must be removed. Either, they argue, an agreement be reached with the Islamic authorities to move it in its entirety to Mecca or wherever the Islamic authorities decide, or a superior

force will cause its destruction. This superior force will either be superpower acting on a God's instructions, or a God who will use the forces of nature.

Such beliefs are not limited to these sects, but present to some degree in many non-denominational churches particularly in United States. However, and this must be stressed, these views are held by a small though very vocal minority who make no distinction between their faith and politics.[10] For the vast majority of Christians, Temple Mount is significant as the stage of Christ's Passion.

The possibility of rebuilding the Temple has never faded from Judaism. However, there is wide disagreement among its major branches. In Orthodox Judaism it is called for in daily prayers at the very times when sacrifice was offered in Solomon's Temple. For them there must be a Messiah to bring the world back to God and usher in an age of peace and restore the cleansing power of animal sacrifice. To achieve this, the Temple must be rebuilt. In the Mishneh Torah, Maimonides makes a declaration on the future:

> King Messiah will arise and restore the kingdom of David to its former state and original sovereignty…. He who does not believe in a restoration or does not wait the coming of the Messiah denies not only the teachings of the prophets but also those of the Law of Moses our Teacher.[11]

He cites several sources to show that belief in the coming of Messiah is from the teaching of Moses.[12] However he adds caution:

> Do not think the King Messiah will have to perform signs and wonders, bring anything new into being revive the dead or do similar things. It is not so… The sages and prophets did not long for the days of the Messiah that Israel might exercise dominion over the world, rule the heathen or be exalted by nations, or that it might eat drink and rejoice. Their aspiration was that Israel be free to devote itself to the Law and its wisdom…"[13]

However, even among the orthodox only the extreme call for aggressive action now. This is most graphically represented by the "Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful" organization. Their statement from the summer of 2010 reads:

> God is expecting the government of Israel to immediately remove the enemy from the Temple Mount and to rebuild the Temple with no delay. The Arab-Islamic occupation of the Temple Mount and their presence

upon the location of the Holy Temple, which is an abomination of the Name of God, is soon to be finished under the judgment of God.

Israel is now in the midst of the end-time, when the God of Israel is fulfilling literally each of the end-time prophesies word by word. It is a true privilege to be born during such a significant Godly time.

And all will proceed in an orderly fashion according God's plan:

First is the foundation of the modern state of Israel and the miraculous victories that G-d gave the people of Israel in the wars against 22 Arab enemy states.

Second is the re-gathering of the people of Israel from all over the world to the Promised Land.

Third is the liberation and consecration of the Temple Mount and fourth is the building of the Third Temple.

The final step is the coming of the King of Israel, Messiah Ben David.[14]

Conservative Judaism does not believe that sacrifice should be restored. They hold the view that the coming of a Messiah is in God's hands, and, as no one can say for certain when it might happen, each individual must live in way that prepares for it. Until then, therefore, they see no need to rebuild the Temple.

Those within reform and reconstructionist Judaism do believe in the need to rebuild. Their “Temple” is within every synagogue and they so name them. In their view there may be a messianic age, and all should work for it seeking peace, justice and harmony in the world, but a Messiah may never come. They view sacrifice as a primitive form of worship. In this they also find support in the writings of Maimonides, but earlier texts than those cited by the Orthodox Judaism, where he stated that God had deliberately moved Jews away from sacrifices towards prayer, as prayer was a higher form of worship. Again it must be stressed that it is only an extreme minority that is aggressively seeking to rebuild the Temple, but a minority that does have influence in Jerusalem.

Religion will dictate the future of the place as it has so forcibly defined its past. Just as both the image and the physical reality of Solomon's Temple has survived in the collective memory for 3000 years, so it will for millennia to come. And nothing will diminish the idea and the reality of the Haram and

the Dome of the Rock to the presence and prophecies of Islam.

Accepting that the future unavoidably shapes the past there are lessons in reflecting on these 4000 and more years of human occupation. Imagine watching this history in reverse from the crest of the Mount of Olives. The view is fixed; the swirling movement is the blur of changing seasons, all human activity reduced to inconsequential noise. And through all the centuries the form of the land remains essentially the same; only the surface changes.

In the present, the monumental buildings that marked the birth of Islam still dominate and enclosing all is Herod's great wall. At the west end the simple mass of al-Aqsa Mosque and, glowing in the center, the Dome of the Rock. Moving back from a bright present, the Dome retreats into a state of neglect, its gilded surface dimmed. There is occasional animation as structures go up and come down and, hazy in the distance, the old city is moves from ruin to youth, and the Dome re-emerges in delicate colors with its gold returned; all is renewed. Then, a fleeting moment of chaos and again all is new, but different. The Dome sits among halls and courts, and rising boldly at the crown is a great gilded cross. It is the mark of the Crusaders. And just as suddenly as they arrive these accretions recede then disappear, and through the fog of conflict a more austere stage is revealed. The crescent moon reappears. Three more centuries pass and there is thrilling sense of moving back to a fundamental event: here, briefly, is the Dome in the first years of its creation, strange and powerful; and suddenly it is gone, leaving behind only a confused outcrop rock, a wasteland. Thirteen hundred years have passed.

And for three centuries in a wasteland it remains. Herod's wall still defines the enclosure, but over long stretches even it is in ruins. Only fragments of structures remain as the platform recedes into a vast empty field with signs that cattle may be grazing, and quite visible are wandering paths into the city through what appears to be an ancient gate, a place without purpose. Traveling further back, forms and figures and orderly patterns of use begin to appear. Ritual activities reemerge around a great statue of an emperor in front of a grand Roman temple. Barely two centuries pass, then it is glimpsed being formed and then it is gone. A pause is followed by a moment of dreadful violence, just a moment in our imagining, but enough to feel the pain rising through the violence and see Herod's Temple emerging from the

flames. In a blur, briefly sense the presence of tens of thousands of worshipers and onlookers and the flickering smoke of many fires in a regression of High Holy Days. Almost 2000 years have passed.

Herod's vast rebuilding did not survive a century; the imagination travels back through the years of construction until all that is left is a large, aged structure sitting within a modest enclosure. And back five centuries to its creation, and then through decades of desolation in an abandoned city and into the flash and confusion of war and conquest by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, Then to see again the great, aging hulk of the first Temple, Solomon's Temple, reemerging out of the destruction; dark and decrepit but massive and all-powerful. The vast portal guarding the Holy of Holies becomes more sublime as it sheds its age; though always in motion, the figures of the zodiac become increasingly vivid swaying on the vast curtain that veils the mystery. Receding back through peaceful times the walls become less defensive. Then all is newly made, a vast monolith built from the bright stone that seems to hold the heat of the desert. Around it a modest town straggles south, insignificant. It is a thousand years before Herod.

Centuries regress and the town dissolves into fertile valleys and ridges and small clusters of farmsteads. Another thousand pass, and we have reached the time of Abraham: the form of the land is unchanged, yet the desert has gone and groves of olive trees rise up and crest on Mount Moriah. And if on this place there was a confrontation between God and Abraham, it is no more visible than any other human action as time recedes. Except for the faint traces of what may have been paths formed by men or animals, the constants, as we move beyond human time, are the seasons and the unchanging patterns in nature. And finally these, too, vanish until all that is left are changing colors of the season.

The overriding impression from this flight back in time is how little happened: only a few significant events through all these centuries; events, however, with epic consequences. The presence of Abraham, whether in fact or in faith; the Temple, thrice built twice destroyed, then after a hiatus the creation of the Islam's formative monument, the Dome of the Rock, which, though sometimes beleaguered, has survived grandly into the present. This ground once made sacred has become forever profoundly sacrosanct, even when abandoned by the Christians, even when possessed by succeeding

religions. Projecting 4000 years into the future from the experience of the past clearly indicates that it will remain sacrosanct and will retain undiminished the monuments and the memories of monuments that it has enshrined. A deep understanding of the past history of a place is vital in guiding its future.

Notes

[1] Sura 39, *Crowds*: 68 and 69.

[2] Sura 17, *The Children of Israel*:104.

[3] Matthew 26: 26–27.

[4] 1 Corinthians 6: 19–20.

[5] Matthew 24: 3–5.

[6] Matthew 24: 30.

[7] Daniel 7: 7–13.

[8] Acts 1: 6–12.

[9] Revelation 20: 1–6:

> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.
>
> But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.
>
> This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him thousand years.

[10] They are viewed by some observers as having undue influence on US foreign policy.

[11] Mishneh Torah 14, Kings and Wars, 11.1. From Jonathan A. Jacobs (2011), *Judaic Sources and Western Thought: Jerusalem's Enduring Presence*, pp. 55–57. Oxford University Press.

[12] Among them, Deuteronomy 19: 8–9 and 30: 3–5.

[13] Mishneh Torah 14, Kings and Wars, 11.3

[14] “Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful” website http://www.templemountfaithful.org/(accessed April 9, 2012).

Plate 1 Herod's new temple, view from the southwest.

From *Model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period*. Publication of the Israel Museum and Holy Land Tourism, with permission

Plate 2 Herod's temple showing the mass of the Royal Stoa on the left in relation to the ancient sanctuary. The slender wall at the center marks the point beyond which Gentiles, Greeks, must not pass.

From *Model of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period*. Publication of the Israel Museum and Holy Land Tourism, with permission

Plate 3 The path from the Mount of Olives to the south face of Temple Mount. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 4 Hellenistic tombs from the second century BCE that Christ and all approaching the Temple from the Mount of Olives would have passed. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 5 The Southern Wall on which Herod's *Stoa* once sat. The three Hulda gates are barely perceptible on the right; the dome of al-Aqsa Mosque is on the left. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 6 The great stair leading to the entry into the Royal Stoa.

From the diorama in the Tower of David Museum, Jerusalem. Photograph: Alan Balfour

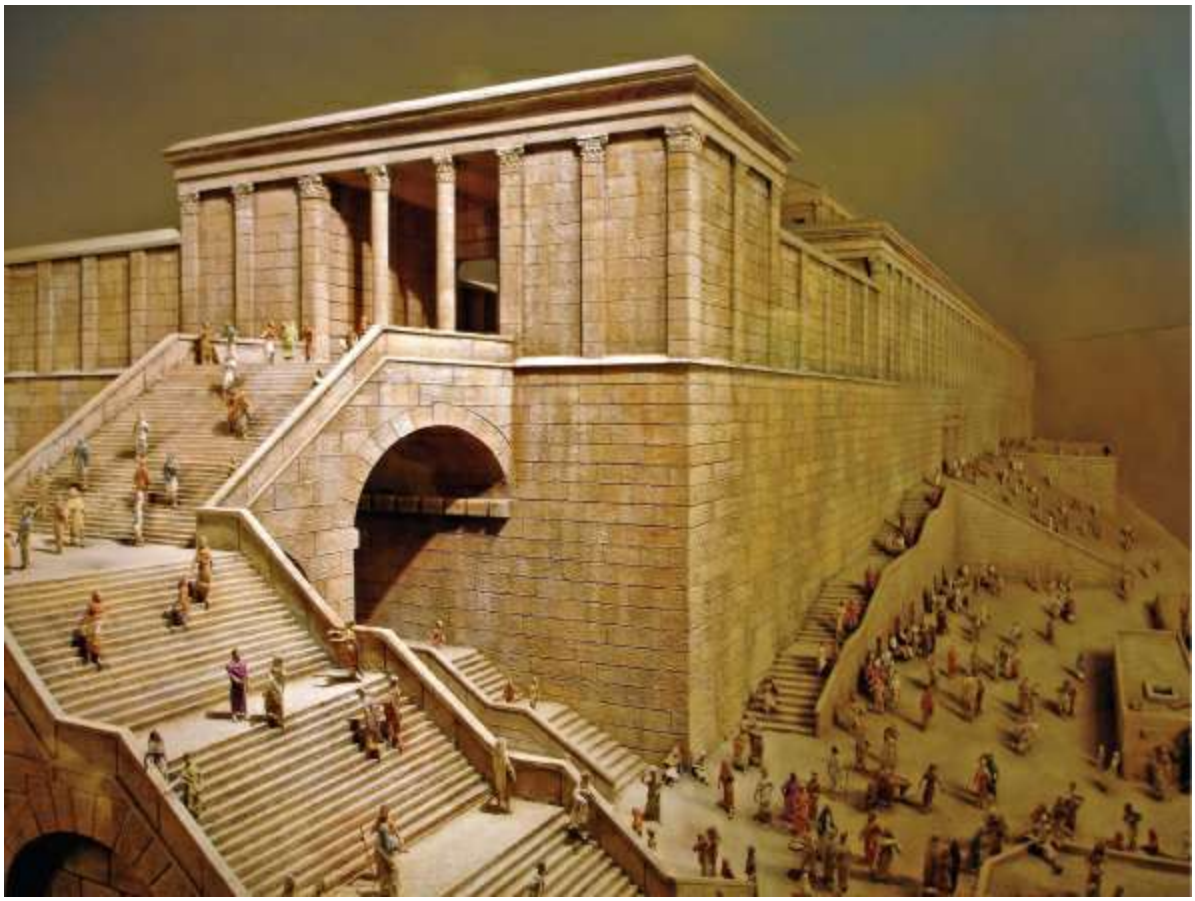


Plate 7 Inside the Royal portico: from Alec Garrard's model of Herod's Temple. The model in clay and wood was assembled over a period of thirty years in a shed behind his house in Norfolk. Photograph: Geoff Robinson Photography.

Plate 8 *The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus,*' David Roberts. This is the largest of the Roberts' lithographs. Although the view is elevated, Roberts had gained a precise understanding of the topography from his earlier work in the city. The view is from the northeast with the towers flanking Herod's palace at the center. (The left part of the image is still recognizable in Figure 4.) It depicts the Roman attack on the walls of the city before the Temple is destroyed. Roberts portrays Herod's Temple in grand classical style—he would assume that the rebuilding would inhabit the Hellenistic form dominant in Herod's city. *The Destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD,* engraved by Louis Haghe (1806–85) (litho) by David Roberts (1796–1864) (after) Private Collection/The Stapleton Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library.

Plate 9 *Herod's Temple, Morning View from the Royal Stoa during Pesach*. Balogh Balage.

© Balage Balogh/Art Resource, New York

Plate 10 *The Destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem*, Francesco Hayez, (1867) Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Venice. Again this work has been composed

from a close reading of Josephus, in the foreground is the altar for burnt offerings with the vast portal to the Temple dimly seen through the smoke on the left. As with Poussin the cloisters in the background conform in scale to Josephus. Portraying the architecture as elemental and unadorned adds to the sense of realism. Cameraphoto Arte Venezia/The Bridgeman Art Library.

Plate 11 The steps at the southwest corner uncovered by archeologists after the creation of the State of Israel, showing the destruction by falling masonry. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 12 Burnt-out shells of three of the stores that sat beneath the stair leading to the Royal Stoa. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 13 On the platform of Temple Mount in the space once occupied by Herod's Royal Portico the *Stoa*, looking west to the al-Aqsa Mosque. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 14 Looking down from the Mount of Olives to the southern end of Temple Mount showing Herod's vast Southern Wall above which sat the Stoa. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 15 The Madaba Mosaic: Jerusalem in the last decades of the sixth century. What at first seems abstract and diagrammatic on closer inspection becomes precise mapping of the major building of the city: the *Cardo*, the major business street, bisects the city, as it still does. At one end stands St. Stephen's Gate, with the Church of the Anastasis (Constantine's Basilica) at the center, upside down in the convention of the mapmaker yet precise in reflecting the irregularity of its site.

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Plate 16 Dome of the Rock, sectional model in the Tower of David Museum, Jerusalem. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 17 Crusader map of Jerusalem and Palestine. Golgotha, the site of Calvary and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher dominate the lower left quadrant, and in the upper right, above the *claustrum salomonis*, is the *templu salomonis*—above a simple image of the Dome of the Rock. Anonymous, twelfth century, Koninklijka Bibliotech, National Library of the Netherlands.

Plate 18 *Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple*, 1570. Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco, 1541–1614). The architecture is once more based on a close reading of Josephus. Minneapolis Institute of Art; The William Hood Dunwoody Fund.

Plate 19 Van Adrichem's map of Jerusalem. *Jervsalem et suburbia eius, sicut tempore Christi floruit*, Christiaan van Adrichem (1533–1585).

From: *Jerusalem …et suburbanorum …brevis description,* Köln 1590. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project

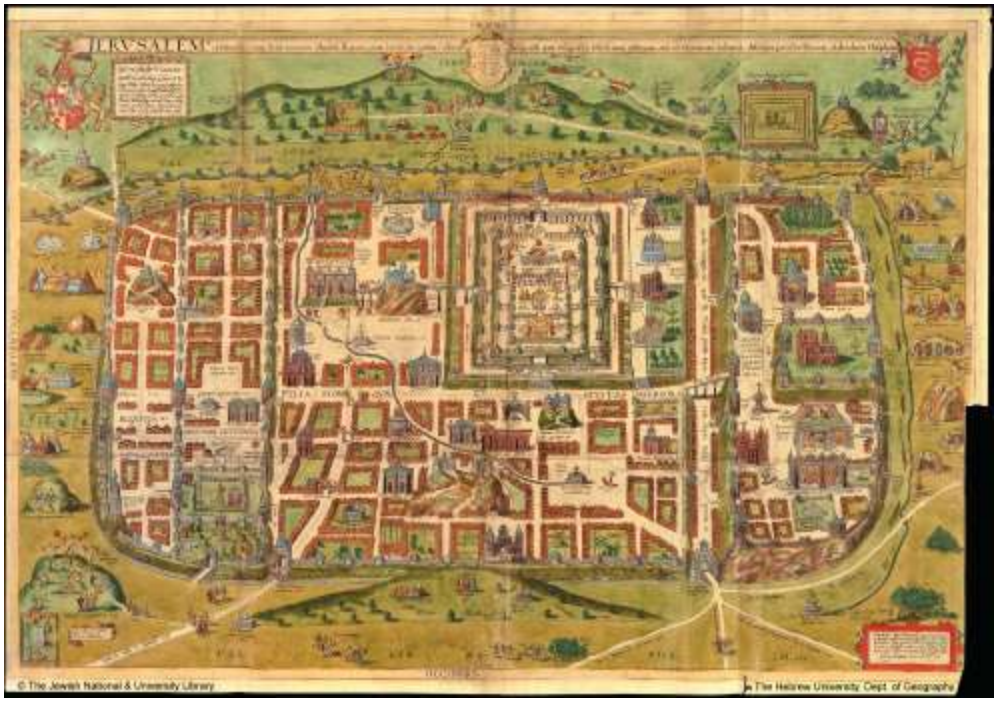

Plate 20 *The Ascension of Muhammad*, from the Khamsa of Elyas Nezami (1140–1209), 1504 (vellum) by Islamic School (sixteenth century). At right is al Ka'ba wrapped in the Kiswa; the small ochre pavilion sitting on a raised platform at left is the Dome of the Rock. Private Collection/Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library.

Plate 21 *Jerusalem, Holy City* (*Hierosolyma, urbs sancta*) Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg, 1575. The ruined center of the town appears above the Dome. The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project.

Ezechielis v.
Hæc est Ierusalem. Ego eam in medio Gentium
posui, et in eius circuitu terras.
HIEROSOLYMA VRBS SANC
TA. IVDEAE. TOTIVSQVE
ORIENTIS LONGE CLARIS
SIMA. QVA AMPLITVDINE AC
MAGNIFICENTIA HOC NOS
TRO ÆVO CONSPICVA EST.
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Plate 22 *Ierusalem* 1698, Cornelius De Bruyn 1652–1726.

From: *Reizen van …door Klein Asia …en Palestina.* The National Library of Israel, Eran Laor Cartographic Collection, Shapell Family Digitization Project and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Geography—Historic Cities Research Project

Plate 23 *Mosque of Omar showing the site of the Temple*, David Roberts, 1839. Again looking north from the Mount of Olives to Herod's great Southern Wall. In 1838 and 1839, Roberts spent eleven months traveling and sketching throughout the Middle East. The Belgian engraver Louis Haghe produced lithographs from the Roberts' drawings. This is *The Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt and Nubia*, published between 1842 and 1846. Author's collection.

Plate 24 *Inside the Dome of the Rock*, watercolor, Carl Werner, 1863.

Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Plate 25 The Herodian vestibule behind the now-blocked Huldah Gate, that led to the stair that rose to Temple Mount. On the painting is written: *The Gate of Allah the Prophet. W. Simpson, 1871.* From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Plate 26 *Foundation of the Southeast Corner of the Haram Wall … Jerusalem*, William “Crimea” Simpson. From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Plate 27 *Passage to the Fountain of the Virgin W Warren 1864*, William “Crimea” Simpson. These were newspaper illustrations and the titles may be more journalistic than factual: there is no mention of this passage in Wilson's text. From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Plate 28 *The Steps of Abraham*, William “Crimea” Simpson. These are the rock-cut steps that lead to the platform from the largest of the many cisterns, “the Great Sea,” that lie within Temple Mount. From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

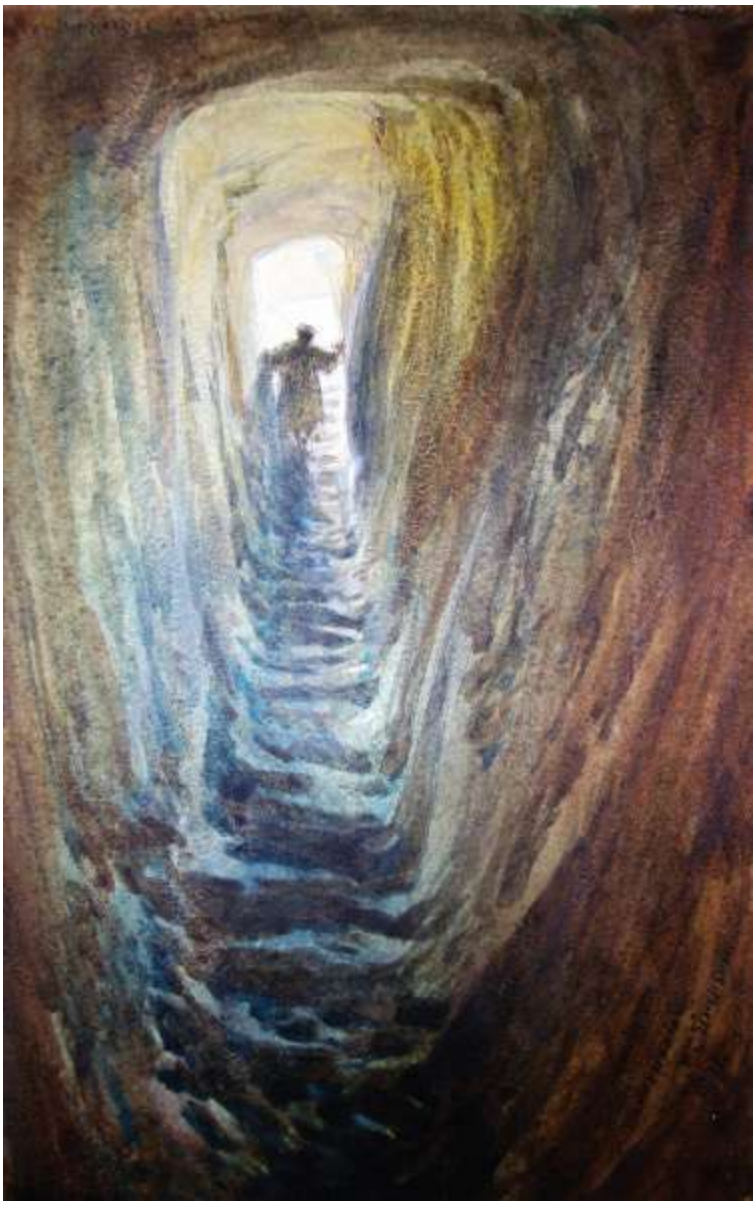

Plate 29 *Wilson's Arch*, William “Crimea” Simpson. Presumed to have been a part of a bridge that connected the Temple Mount to the city to the west. (Now engaged in the religious activity around the Western Wall.) From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Plate 30 *The Great Sea*, William “Crimea” Simpson. This cavernous water tank, cistern No 8 on Warren's map (Fig. 8.12), lies beneath the platform at the northeast corner of al-Aqsa mosque. From the archives of the Palestine Exploration Fund (PEF).

Plate 31 Approaching the Dome from the south. Photograph: Alan Balfour.

Plate 32 *Haram al Sharif* looking west from the Mount of Olives. From the view the imagination is able to recreate the great mass of Herod's Stoa on the left and to see the memory of the Temple in the presence of the Dome. Photograph: Alan Balfour.